



San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families' High School Partnerships Strategy: Implementation Study Report

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Executive Summary

San Francisco's Department of Children, Youth, and their Families (DCYF) is committed to meeting the needs of the city's youth and their families by providing inclusive, informed, and individualized care to the San Francisco community. DCYF's High School Partnerships (HSPART) Strategy is designed to provide opportunities for students at San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) high schools with work-based learning and career exposure opportunities embedded in and intentionally connected to the school day. Specifically, the HSPART programs have been implemented at Downtown High School, John O'Connell High School, Phillip and Sala Burton High School, SF International High School, and the June Jordan School for Equity.

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) partnered with DCYF to conduct an implementation study of HSPART. The study focused on understanding the structure and design of HSPART, patterns in program participation and student graduation, and student experiences with the range of services HSPART programs provide to support them with preparation for post-secondary opportunities, including work and higher education. AIR conducted semi-structured interviews with school staff, service provider staff, and employer partners. AIR also conducted focus groups with HSPART students, reviewed available program reviews, and analyzed administrative data.

At a high-level, we found that:

- The integration of HSPART programming in the school day facilitates equitable access to programming.
- HSPART programming focuses on preparing older students (e.g., 11th and 12th grade) for postsecondary opportunities.
- Although COVID-19 related restrictions caused changes in program delivery, students engaged in more HSPART programming over time. However, COVID-19 related staff turnover and loss of institutional knowledge has created various challenges in providing appropriate work-based learning opportunities for students.
- While the majority of HSPART students graduate from high school, the majority of HSPART students do not enter higher education post-graduation.

Introduction

The San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) is committed to meeting the needs of the city's youth and their families by providing inclusive, informed, and individualized care. DCYF offers a wide range of services to its constituents. One service area is Youth Workforce Development (YWD), which seeks to prepare youth for adulthood through a continuum of tiered career exposure and work-based learning opportunities that are developmentally appropriate and meet youths' needs. Anchored in a youth development approach, YWD programs provide a range of services, including early introductions to career options, training in job skills, exposure to career-oriented employment, and other targeted programming for high-needs youth.

YWD services are delivered through five strategies and initiatives —one of which is the High School Partnerships strategy (HSPART).¹ HSPART is designed to provide San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) students with work-based learning and career exposure opportunities embedded in and intentionally connected to the school day. HSPART programs are expected to align work-based learning opportunities with students' academic curricula through close collaboration with school staff. Ultimately, HSPART programs aim to support students at targeted high schools in their development of college and career readiness skills that will support them in successfully navigating the labor market.

DCYF is dedicated to results-based accountability planning that assesses the effectiveness and equity of its activities when determining the allocation of resources. In service of this aim, the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) partnered with DCYF to conduct an implementation study of HSPART. The implementation study focused on understanding the structure and design of HSPART programs, patterns in participation, student graduation, and higher-education outcomes as well as student experiences with the HSPART programs provided to help them prepare for postsecondary opportunities, including work and higher education.

This report presents findings from the HSPART implementation study. At a high level, we found the following:

- **The integration of HSPART programming in the school day facilitates equitable access to programming.** As programming is incorporated in coursework, students do not need to find additional time after school to engage in HSPART content. Service providers

¹ YWD's four other strategies and initiatives are: (1) Career Awareness, (2) the Mayor's Youth Employment and Education Program, (3) San Francisco YouthWorks, and (4) Youth Workforce Development. All strategies provide youth with opportunities (as early as middle-school) of varying intensity related to the exploration of career interests, development of job readiness skills, and exposure to the workplace and employment.

arrange for transportation to and from worksites for off-campus student activities during the school day, host on-campus HSPART workspaces for additional support, and, during the COVID-19 pandemic, adapted content and opportunities.

- **Although COVID-19-related restrictions caused changes in program delivery, students engaged in more HSPART programming over time.** Historically underserved students, including Black and Latinx students and English language learners, comprised a greater proportion of students in HSPART programs relative to the overall SFUSD population. HSPART thus may promote equitable postsecondary outcomes by increasing opportunities for underserved students to increase preparation for postsecondary life.
- **HSPART programming focuses on preparing older students (e.g., 11th and 12th grade) for postsecondary opportunities.** Career awareness activities include presentations from guest speakers and self-paced research and reflection on postsecondary opportunities. Experiential learning activities include worksite visits, job shadowing, and internships. Students receive a wide range of job readiness skills coaching.
- **Both HSPART staff and SFUSD school-based staff report the need for additional support coordinating with one another to support youth development.** COVID-19-related staff turnover and loss of institutional knowledge created challenges in providing appropriate opportunities for students. For instance, HSPART students are offered internship opportunities, but placements do not always reflect their career interests. Service providers also report challenges with establishing partnerships with employers.
- **While the majority of HSPART participants graduate high school (as consistent with the overall SFUSD population), they do not enroll in higher education.** Higher education matriculation rates were the lowest in School Year (SY) 2021–2022 for HSPART participants. In contrast, rates of higher education matriculation are higher for the overall SFUSD population.

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

- The **Background** section provides a brief overview of the literature related to youth workforce development and HSPART.
- The **Methodology** section describes the study design and methods, including the research questions, data collection activities, and analytic approach.
- The **Findings** section presents the results of our analysis and is organized into three main sections based on the study’s research questions.
- The **Discussion and Future Directions** section discusses our interpretations of the findings, limitations of our analysis, and suggestions for future directions.

Background

Preparing today's youth for postsecondary success requires more than ensuring that they are academically ready to leave high school. Youth need to have meaningful opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills they need to transition to postsecondary education and/or the workforce. Youth who have historically been underserved—including those who have been justice involved and those from Black communities, Latinx communities, and families with low incomes—have education and training trajectories that may make it difficult for them to compete in the labor market (Urban Alliance, 2014). There is a breadth of literature documenting how the changing economy has made it increasingly difficult for youth without the proper training to secure jobs that provide a living wage and offer for career advancement (Carnevale et al., 2016). Underlying some of these challenges is what is commonly referred to as the “skills gap”—job seekers do not have the skills that employers desire (Carnevale et al., 2013; Lippman et al., 2015; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2018).

One strategy for addressing the skills gap and preparing youth of all backgrounds to thrive in the labor market is incorporating career readiness training, alongside college preparation, into the school day. Indeed, since the Every Student Succeeds Act was authorized in 2015, many states and school districts have implemented policies and initiatives focused on integrating college and career readiness into the K–12 curriculum (English et al., 2017). Many of these initiatives are comprised of the three main components that are typically part of workforce development programs: 1) job readiness skills development, 2) work-based learning experiences, and 3) developmentally appropriate supports services (Amin et al., 2020).

We have described each component in the following sections as well as an overview of HSPART.

Job Readiness Skills

We use the term “job readiness skills” to refer to the foundational knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to successfully navigate the workplace; these skills are transferable across jobs. They include knowledge about how to **search and apply for jobs**, an understanding of **professional expectations** related to workplace behaviors, and the acquisition of **foundational academic skills**, such as mathematics, reading, and writing. Development of this skillset is a common component of youth workforce programs and school curricula. For example, a recent study of Youth CareerConnect reported that almost all participating schools included workplace expectations as part of their job readiness curriculum (Maxwell et al., 2017).

Job readiness also consists of **advanced cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal skills**. Examples of such skills include critical thinking, problem-solving, self-management, resilience, independence, collaboration, communication, and conflict resolution. This range of skills is

frequently referred to in the workforce literature using terms such as “21st century skills,” “employability skills,” and “soft skills” (Lippman et al., 2015). While the terminology varies, there is a consensus that employers highly value advanced cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal skills. One report suggests that employers consider soft skills to be more important than undergraduate degrees (Hart Research Associates, 2013). However, there is limited evidence as to which type of soft skills matter for workplace success. Lippman et al.’s (2015) study identified five that are most likely to contribute to success: (1) social skills, (2) communication skills, (3) high-order thinking, (4) self-control, and (5) positive self-concept. More research is needed to better understand why and how soft skills matter.

Additionally, the literature notes important equity considerations related to making youth job ready. A core aspect of soft skills training is teaching youth about workplace behaviors and culture. Klein (2018) voiced concern that building a “professional vocabulary” requires youth to learn how to “code-switch,” which promotes the idea that they “need to ‘act white’ to be seen as a professional in the workplace”. Moreover, Hora (2023) warned that what are considered appropriate professional behaviors or communication skills often reflect “norms for one disproportionately powerful cultural group—white men”.

Intersection of Job and College Readiness

Beyond academic preparation and achievement, scholars have emphasized the importance of helping students develop noncognitive, intrapersonal, and social skills to support college readiness (Duckworth & Yeager, 2015; Gaertner & McClarty, 2015). Like the workforce literature, the educational literature refers to these sets of skills using a multitude of terms, including “soft skills,” “social, emotional and effective skills,” and “metacognitive skills” (Duckworth & Yeager, 2015; Savitz-Romer et al., 2015). Specific examples of skills include communication, problem-solving, collaboration and teamwork, time management, grit and perseverance, and self-regulation (Conley & French, 2014; Duckworth & Yeager, 2015; Nelson, n.d.).

Work-Based Learning Experiences

Integral to preparing youth for the workforce are work-based learning experiences that provide them with opportunities to gain experience and practice workplace competencies in the classroom and/or in real-world settings (Cahill, 2016). Work-based learning experiences are especially valuable for helping students make connections among what they are learning in the classroom, what they are interested in, and what careers are possible. The experiences and activities that constitute work-based learning exist on a continuum that moves from general awareness of work and careers to gaining knowledge and skills related to specific workplaces and careers (see Exhibit 1; Linked Learning Alliance, 2012).

Exhibit 1. Work-Based Learning Continuum



- **Career awareness** activities help youth understand the broad spectrum of career options available, the type of work performed in those careers, and the type of training needed to pursue and succeed in those careers. Examples of such activities include field trips to worksites, guest speakers who share information about their professions, and class projects. Career awareness activities can begin in earlier grades and be sequenced over time to help youth gain knowledge of a wide range of careers and sectors.
- **Career exploration** activities provide opportunities for youth to learn about specific careers and how their strengths, interests, and skills may connect with those careers. In contrast to career awareness activities, these activities allow youth to deeply examine specific careers rather than develop a general understanding of work and career options. Such activities include job shadowing, career planning, and informational interviews with professionals. Youth often engage in career exploration activities in Grades 9 and 10. Through these activities, they can refine their areas of interests and make more informed decisions about career preparation and training opportunities (Linked Learning Alliance, 2012).
- **Career preparation** activities support youth in developing and applying job readiness skills through experiential learning. Such activities involve direct engagement and partnership with employers and other professionals. Examples include internships and pre-apprenticeships. Youth typically engage in career preparation activities in Grades 11 and 12. Through these activities, youth get sustained, direct interactions with employers.
- **Career training** activities provide youth with sustained interaction and partnership with employers and hands-on experience applying job readiness skills and occupation-specific skills in a workplace. These activities include apprenticeships and on-the-job training. A high-quality experience will help youth build and practice career-specific skills that prepare them for employment. Rather than learning *about* work, such activities allow youth to actively learn by *doing* work related to specific careers (Linked Learning, 2012), and the literature suggests that employers value work-based learning experiences (Ross et, 2020).

As they move along the work-based learning continuum, youth are introduced to prospective careers by participating in activities that help them move from discovering career interests to exploring career opportunities to gaining substantive work experience. As they explore and learn skills, they gain a better understanding of career pathways, which may entail further training through college or trade school. In this way, work-based learning enables students to make connections between their career interests and postsecondary education options.

Support Services

In addition to job readiness and work-based learning, youth workforce development programs provide a range of developmentally appropriate supports and wraparound services. Although

definitions of “wraparound services” differ slightly, the term is commonly meant to indicate an intensive, individualized, holistic approach to service provision (Skemer et al., 2017). These supports and services, though broad in scope, can be organized into the following categories:

- **Personal development** supports are aimed at enrichment and are not specific to any one career pathway or trajectory. Personal development skills include financial literacy (Drake & LaFrance, 2006; Geckeler et al., 2017), health education (Skemer et al., 2017), and parenting education for youth who are pregnant or parenting (Drake & LaFrance, 2006).
- **Personal support** designed to help youth and young adults address challenges and barriers that may prevent them from succeeding in the program. Personal support services commonly include logistical supports to mitigate issues related to transportation, childcare, housing and food security, and finances (Drake & LaFrance, 2006; Koball et al., 2016).
- **Mentoring** involves pairing program participants with a supportive nonparent adult or older peer (MENTOR, 2015). There is evidence that mentoring improves a young person’s behavioral, social, emotional, and academic outcomes (DuBois et al., 2011). Mentoring can be provided by program staff or an external partner, such as an employer.
- **Family and community engagement** involves opportunities for youths’ families to participate in the program and for youth to connect with their communities. Recent research suggests that community-based projects aimed at social change may bolster career development for youth from marginalized communities (Rapa et al., 2018).
- **Post-program follow-ups** support youth beyond program completion and as they transition into employment. Follow-up services may include job coaching, networking opportunities, and job search assistance (Cramer et al., 2019; Theodos et al., 2016).

Youth workforce development programs serve youth from diverse backgrounds; thus, the programs must provide an array of supports and wraparound services that meet youths’ needs.

Department of Children, Youth and their Families’ High School Partnerships

In 2018, DCYF awarded grants to four local San Francisco organizations—Bayview Hunters Point YMCA, Community Youth Center of San Francisco, Jewish Vocational Services, and Peer Resources—to implement HSPART. Each service provider partnered with one of five San Francisco high schools to design and deliver HPSART program services. The five high schools are Downtown High School (Downtown), John O’Connell High School (O’Connell), Phillip and Sala Burton Academic High School (Burton), San Francisco International High School (SFI), and the June Jordan School for Equity. HSPART provides students with targeted training within specific industry sectors. Exhibit 2 provides a summary of the high school and service provider organizations that are part of each partnership, the school’s academic focus, and the proposed structure of the HSPART program based on the grant application.

Exhibit 2. Overview of HSPART

High school	Service provider	Academic focus	Proposed HSPART Program Services
Downtown High School	Jewish Vocational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project-based model of instruction • Projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Acting for Critical Transformation – Get Out and Learn – Making, Advertising, and Designing as Empowerment – Music and Academics Resisting the System – Wilderness Arts and Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly career development workshops • Customized, in-class and after-school career exploration and employment activities • Portfolio development (e.g., resume, cover letter, etc.) • Paid internships and access to competitive employment • Post-high school transition services
John O’Connell High School	Jewish Vocational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coursework structured around five academic pathways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Building and Construction Trades – Design and Sustainable Technology – Health and Behavioral Sciences – Entrepreneurship and Culinary Arts – Public Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job readiness training • Customized wraparound support • Work-based learning placement and support • Creation of professional development plans • One-on-one coaching support to employer partners • Focus on supporting 11th graders • Introductory activities for 10th graders
June Jordan School for Equity	Peer Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coursework structured around three areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Community – Social justice – Independent thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on education-related careers • Career exploration and college advising for 10th graders • Co-teaching of 9th grade career readiness course for 11th graders • Community education project for 12th graders • Paid work experience during summer for rising 12th graders
Phillip and Sala Burton Academic High School	Bayview Hunter’s Point YMCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coursework structured around four academies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Engineering – Health Sciences – Arts, Media, and Entertainment – Performing Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job readiness training and work-based learning experiences through Burton’s Pathway Program • Train and support employer partners • Additional support services as needed • One-day job shadows for 10th graders • Week-long work-based internship
San Francisco International High School	Community Youth Center of San Francisco	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coursework is designed to support newcomer students by focusing on three areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Linguistic skills – Socio-emotional skills – Cross-cultural skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job readiness training • Work-based learning placement • Weekly English as a Second Language (ESL) • Vocational ESL tutoring • Transition planning and support • Family partnerships

Note. HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy.

Based on the grant applications, all five schools predominantly served students from communities that have traditionally been underserved. Overall, more than three quarters of the students at each school were racial/ethnic minorities, eligible for free or reduced lunch, and/or from low-income neighborhoods. The portion of students who were classified as English language learners ranged from approximately 16% to 25% of the student population at each school, with SFI serving the highest percentage of English language learners.

To support DCYF with examining the extent to which evidence-based practices are integrated into HSPART programming, AIR has been working with the organization to develop and execute a study of program implementation. In the next section, we have described our methodology.

Methodology

The HSPART implementation evaluation is a mixed methods study that draws on both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a holistic picture of how HSPART has been implemented. Overall, this study aims to provide a description of the structure and design of HSPART programs, patterns of participation, and services students receive within HSPART. With this goal in mind, this study explores the following three primary research questions:

1. What is the design and structure of HSPART programs?
2. Who participates in HSPART programs?
3. How do HSPART programs support students in preparing for postsecondary opportunities?

Data Sources

To answer the above research questions, we drew on a combination of qualitative and quantitative data from the following sources:

- **Interviews with school leadership and staff, service provider leadership and program staff, and employer partners.** We interviewed service provider leadership and program staff, school leadership and staff, and employer partners affiliated with each of the partner schools in Winter 2022 and Spring 2023.² We conducted interviews with 26 individuals, with two to five individuals from each school. The interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes and were conducted either in person or virtually using a video call application. We used a semi-structured protocol for each interview, enabling interviewers to select from probing questions that could be asked following key overarching questions (e.g., the protocol allowed asking questions out of order or

² Early in the data collection, AIR learned that the service provider for the June Jordan School for Equity had experienced a significant turnover in staff. Thus, the service provider and its high school partner was excluded from this study.

omitting questions that were irrelevant given previous responses). We asked participants about their involvement with HSPART, their overall perceptions of HSPART activities, and areas of opportunity for the program.

- **Focus groups with HSPART student participants.** To gain an understanding of the experiences of students participating in the programs, we conducted in-person focus groups during a site visit in spring 2023. A total of 31 students participated in the focus groups across all four schools, with an average of eight from each school. Each focus group lasted approximately 60 minutes. We asked participants how they were recruited into HSPART, what they hope to gain from participation, how their postgraduation plans have shifted since participating, and what their overall perceptions were of how HSPART had been preparing them to enter the workforce.
- **Administrative data.** We compiled education records from SFUSD for all students enrolled in SFUSD high schools from SYs 2018–2019 through 2021–2022 as well as records of HSPART participation from DCYF’s Contract Management System (CMS) from 2018 through 2022. We merged CMS participation data with SFUSD education records to identify students who participated in HSPART during our evaluation period (June 2018 through July 2022).
- **Document review.** To better understand the structure and intended implementation for each HSPART program, we collected program documents from each service provider. Requested program documents included service providers’ annual reports related to HSPART program at participating schools, outreach documents to students and families about HSPART, any reflective assessments or assignments, and curriculum outlines for workshops and other planned activities throughout the school year.

Data Analysis

AIR recorded the interviews and focus groups with participants’ permission, then sent the recordings to a transcription company. We used a qualitative analysis software to review and code themes and patterns in the transcripts. Because of the semi-structured nature of the interviews, the themes we identified and coded were often revealed by some interview respondents but not others.

To examine program participation and rates of graduation and higher education matriculation as captured in administrative data, AIR calculated percentages and frequencies of youths’ HSPART participation and outcomes.

To examine trends in program participation, we aggregated demographic characteristics across HSPART participants, non-HSPART participants, and students at non-HSPART-participating SFUSD high schools. We examined average hours of participation across HSPART participants

starting from their first year of program participation and continuing through their final year; we examined these participation trends within grade level, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, English language learner status, special education status, and native language (e.g., language spoken at home). Within HSPART participants, we also examined rates of graduation and higher education matriculation and contrasted rates against those of the non-HSPART-participating SFUSD high schools.

Findings

This section presents our findings from both qualitative and quantitative analyses. When possible, we have presented perspectives from interview and focus group participants alongside quantitative findings (and vice versa) to provide additional context for how program components were implemented. We have organized the findings around the study's three primary research questions.

What Is the Design and Structure of HSPART Programs?

DCYF intended HSPART programs to be embedded within the school day, and we found that service providers were generally able to integrate career exposure and work-based learning activities. Integral to this process is collaboration between service provider and school-based staff to align HSPART activities with school-specific contextual factors (e.g., industry-specific academic pathways, school-based approaches to workforce development, student population). Likewise, service providers must develop and maintain relationships with industry partners to provide work-based learning opportunities to students. Below, we have presented findings related to the integration of HSPART into the school day and coordination across partners.

The Integration of HSPART into the School Day Facilitates Equitable Access to Programming

As much as possible, HSPART activities have been designed to complement existing career exploration structures at each high school. Our interviews suggested that the scope and sequence of HSPART activities focus on industries that align with the schools' academic pathways. For example, Burton and O'Connell offer academic pathways focused on three industries: health science, public service, and building and construction.³ In turn, the service providers at Burton and O'Connell aim to align work-based learning activities with the same pathway-specific industries. At Burton, for instance, HSPART staff may invite an engineer to speak to students to give them additional opportunities to develop connections professionals.

³ Students often select their pathway in 9th or 10th grade through a school-based process that might include ranking pathways they are most interested in or exploring teacher recommendations.

“So we try to bring the focus on which academy you’re in. . . . Those industry partners come in, [and] maybe it’s around engineering or [arts and media], and we also have a medical academy . . . and we bring in practitioners like that.” – HSPART staff

Many HSPART activities occur during the school day as part of students’ coursework. All HSPART students receive course credits for participating in HSPART activities. For students at Burton, O’Connell, and SFI, HSPART activities typically take place in classroom settings during the school day. HSPART job readiness and work-based learning activities are offered through a course that is part of students’ school-day schedule. For students at Burton, although the primary HSPART activities takes place off site, HSPART service provider staff prepare students for the experience throughout the school year as part of their regular coursework. Preparation may include in-school presentations by service providers that focus on career readiness and preparation skills. Embedding job readiness and work-based learning activities within the school day allows students who may have relatively limited exposure to diverse, professional career pathways to learn about a wider range of careers. As an equity-based strategy, it also provides a baseline level of access to professionals over and above what students may have access to in their personal networks (Flannighan & Castine, 2020). This benefit was not lost on the staff—a school-based staff member shared how HSPART provided career exploration activities for underrepresented students in careers that have been historically White or male-dominated, such as those in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM; Fry et al., 2021).

“We had a women-in-STEM presentation for all of our female-identified students, and [the guests] were all women from [companies] like Google And they, for the most part, were all women of color, so I was really pleased to see them. And it also was in partnership with the engineering teacher. [The service provider has] that one day where all our female students go to the auditorium and hear the panel and other things that they’ve done. [The service provider will] bring in speakers into the health science academy.” – School-based staff

Additionally, through HSPART work-based learning activities, students can reflect on the best way to continue pursuing interests they have developed throughout high school (Cahill 2016; Linked Learning, 2012).

Service providers coordinate off-site HSPART activities during the school day and manage student transportation needs. Managing out-of-school-time commitments and transportation creates inequities in youth access to participation in workforce development activities (Cahill, 2016). To mitigate barriers to participation, service providers work to provide off-site HSPART activities (e.g., worksite visits, job shadowing) within the confines of the school day, including considerations for transportation needs. For example, Downton prioritizes off-site HSPART activities that are either within a 1-mile radius of the school or are along accessible public

transportation routes. O’Connell and Burton HSPART staff, meanwhile, provide transportation guidance to students, including suggested bus routes and other forms of public transportation. While navigating complex routes can be challenging for students, one interview respondent shared that part of the experience is for students to “learn how to get there on their own.”

Designated HSPART workspaces at the high schools increase student access to HSPART staff beyond classroom activities. Co-locating HSPART staff within schools provides students with equitable access to available services. HSPART staff at O’Connell and Downtown have dedicated spaces within the school where students can receive additional support or participate in optional workshops. At O’Connell, this workspace is in the student support office, which includes school-based staff, such as guidance counselors. In these spaces, students can talk with HSPART staff about work-based learning activities, such as internships. They can also receive postsecondary support from HSPART and school-based staff. At Downtown, HSPART staff have their own classroom where students can attend workshops or receive one-on-one and small-group support for career readiness activities. Students across schools noted how helpful HSPART staff have been throughout their high school experience.

“They really do care about every student they have in the school, and I really admire how much effort [they put in]. Even though some students may be stubborn or lazy, they still put in the effort of trying for them, [and] there’s times where I may not do work, and they motivate me. They care that the students want to succeed in life . . . and [they] help people be the best they can be.” – HSPART student

HSPART service providers adapted program delivery to address COVID-19 challenges, which resulted in increased access to career exploration and work-based learning opportunities.

Over the past 3 years, HSPART programs across schools have had to adjust to unexpected challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, service providers at some of the schools were able to organize job shadowing experiences for students interested in health-related careers and other people-facing industries. However, with the emergence of pandemic-related restrictions in spring 2020, many work-based learning activities were no longer feasible for students. To adapt to these restrictions, HSPART service providers needed to figure out how to engage students in virtual or remote work-based learning activities. Much like many workplaces transitioning to remote work during the pandemic—with some employers continuing to support remote work as an option—virtual or remote internships and other work-based learning opportunities allow students with limited access to transportation to participate in career exploration activities in a more accessible way.

HSPART Staff and School-Based Staff Report the Need for Additional Support Coordinating with One Another to Support Youth Development

Although most HSPART activities take place within the school day, school-based staff (e.g., classroom teachers) are often not directly involved in program delivery. HSPART staff design and implement almost all the job readiness and work-based learning activities for HSPART programs. School-based staff have limited, if any, involvement in HSPART program implementation. Occasionally, classroom teachers at Burton, O’Connell, and SFI host HSPART staff in their classrooms and might provide behavior management support if needed. One respondent shared that school-based staff must be present during HSPART classroom activities because HSPART staff are not certified or licensed teachers. However, HSPART staff are responsible for delivering and leading HSPART content. Classroom teachers are not required to collect HSPART work from students nor assess their work from HSPART activities. Although school-based staff are sometimes not engaged in HSPART content, multiple school-based staff said they would like to be more involved in HSPART programming to help better align classroom activities with HSPART content.

“I would say there’s been some frustration about the collaboration in the sense that sometimes I think the classroom teachers feel like . . . there’s been a lack of follow through. So there’s been a ‘Here’s my idea’ or ‘Here’s a connection’ or ‘Can you follow up with them?’ [approach]. I’d like to see someone placed here. I’m doing a project with them, and then it doesn’t happen, and we’re not quite sure why it got dropped.” –School-based staff

While close collaboration between HSPART and school-based staff may be limited, the collaboration that does occur demonstrates that intentional co-planning can help students better make connections between HSPART content and their regular course work. The COVID-19 pandemic posed challenges to the ability of HSPART and school-based staff to closely collaborate on aligning HSPART programming and classroom content. Multiple HSPART staff said that collaboration mostly occurs through periodic meetings with school-based staff during which the former provides updates about upcoming HSPART activities. Although periodic meetings appear to be the common mode of interaction, our interviews uncovered instances of intentional activity co-planning. For instance, classroom teachers at Burton adjust their lesson plans to accommodate presentations from HSPART staff in preparation for upcoming career exploration activities. As a result of intentionally aligning academic coursework with HSPART activities, HSPART staff and school-based staff are better aligned to support students.

Service Providers Report Challenges Establishing, Building, and Maintaining Partnerships with Employers

Staff turnover has impacted the degree to which HSPART staff are able to effectively build and maintain relationships with employer partners. Service provider leadership for each

HSPART program has remained consistent since receiving funding from DCYF. However, for some of the programs, staff turnover—particularly since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic—has impacted relationships between HSPART staff and program partners, including work-based-learning industry partners. For example, at SFI, staff turnover in essential service provider positions led to a loss of institutional knowledge, especially regarding connections to industry employer partners and navigating SFUSD’s process for coordinating off-site internships for HSPART students. As a result, HSPART leadership at SFI adjusted work-based learning components from off-site internships to teaching assistant positions for students in nearby SFUSD educational facilities. For students in HSPART programs that have experienced institutional knowledge loss due to HSPART staff turnover, access to previously established work-based learning opportunities has decreased. This decrease in opportunities can impact the types of careers students are introduced to if the relationships between HSPART program staff and previous employer partners no longer exist.

A lack of sustainable relationships with employer partners has equity-related implications for the types of careers some students are exposed to throughout their HSPART experience. For example, some students might have opportunities to participate in work-based learning opportunities in the health sciences, while others are only offered retail positions. As we describe in greater detail below, HSPART staff have experienced challenges recruiting employer partners to serve as internship worksites and participate in activities that involve more sustained engagement. Without consistent employer partners, HSPART staff face challenges in developing a pipeline of work-based learning opportunities. This can result in inconsistent programming each year as relationships with new industry partners are constantly being built.

How Do Students Gain Access to HSPART Programming, and What Are Their Participation Patterns?

All students at SFUSD schools implementing HSPART programming are eligible to participate in HSPART during their high school career. With the exception of Downtown, HSPART-participating schools have used minimal program resources toward recruitment. A larger portion of older students (i.e., 11th and 12th grade students) and historically underserved students participated in HSPART programs, though many youth participated in programming overall. We have described these findings in detail in the following sections.

Recruitment and Enrollment of Students in HSPART Programs Vary Significantly by School Context

At schools where HSPART is integrated within existing academic structures, there is less need for service providers to actively recruit students for HSPART. In Burton, O’Connell, and SFI, students are automatically enrolled in HSPART as part of their overall educational experience and remain enrolled until they leave the high school. This strategy ensures that all students

have access to HSPART programming regardless of their academic pathway. Downtown, on the other hand, actively recruits students to participate in HSPART at the beginning of each semester. When students enroll at Downtown, they receive information about the HSPART program from the service provider and school staff, including career exploration opportunities during lunch and afterschool. One respondent shared that this ongoing recruitment is primarily due to the short-term enrollment of students at the school as they recover credits to graduate. HSPART provides students who have faced barriers to graduation throughout their education career with the opportunity to receive course credit and earn money through a work-based learning program while moving closer to finishing high school. As a result, HSPART staff design activities that increase access to postsecondary opportunities and reflect the unique needs of students who are interested in work-based learning experiences.

Financial incentives can be an effective strategy for recruiting and retaining students in HSPART programs. One respondent at Downtown said that financial incentives have contributed to success in recruiting and enrolling students for HSPART throughout the school year. After enrolling in the program and meeting HSPART minimum participation requirements, students receive a stipend for completing internships and program workshops. HSPART activities outside the school day expand students' access to HSPART staff but require them to independently seek assistance from staff. For students who have other obligations (e.g., afterschool jobs, tutoring during lunch), the timing of HSPART activities could be a barrier to engagement. Students are excited about the opportunity to get paid through HSPART participation and shared that the trainings give them “extra ways to make money other than just the internship.” Likewise, students noted that the financial incentive encouraged them to participate and complete the program.

“[The HSPART program] is motivational. If we finish the training, we got \$200. So [it] motivated you to go and do the training and get a job.” – HSPART student

The experience at Downtown reflects existing evidence on the use of financial incentives in youth workforce development programs, such as Job Corps and Year Up (Buschmann & Haimson, 2008; Treskon, 2016). Financial incentives can promote program engagement by helping meet needs that would otherwise pose a barrier to participation. For example, a recent study of Year Up—a sectoral job training program serving—found that the program’s stipend played a critical role in enabling youth to participate (Fein & Hamadyk, 2018).

Interview responses suggest that service providers do not have the resources to conduct comprehensive outreach to non-English-speaking families. Equity-centered practices encourage outreach materials to be systematically available in languages represented in school populations and communities (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Tang Yan et al., 2022). To increase

awareness of HSPART, program staff use existing outreach mechanisms for parent and family engagement, such as school newsletters and external communications. When asked about translation services for increase non-English-speaking families' awareness of HSPART, service providers shared that SFUSD translation services are sometimes used if HSPART materials are part of existing school outreach efforts. However, findings suggest that HSPART staff have limited resources available to prepare materials in the numerous languages spoken by SFUSD students and families. Thus, HSPART outreach materials may not consistently be translated.

Because of this, parents and/or guardians with limited English may not be fully aware of HSPART opportunities. This lack of awareness has equity implications for communities that are unaware of the resources available to students as well as for how families can support students' career exploration and work-based learning opportunities. Because of this, the 33% of HSPART families that speak another language at home might have less access to HSPART resources compared to their English-speaking counterparts. For HSPART staff at SFI, which has the highest number of international students among HSPART schools, there are more school-based resources to engage non-English-speaking families. However, findings suggest that resources for outreach to non-English speaking families are not consistently available across schools.

Program Participants are Mostly in 11th and 12th Grade and More Likely to be Black and Latinx than Students in non-HSPART Schools.

As of SY 2021–2022, HSPART participants are mostly in 11th and 12th grade. Demographic characteristics, including race/ethnicity, English language learner status, special education status, and native language (e.g., language spoken at home), were generally similar across participants and nonparticipants as well as when compared to the overall SFUSD population.

HSPART programming is designed to provide college and career readiness supports to historically underserved youth. In line with this mission, more Black and Latinx students participate in HSPART programming compared to the number of Black and Latinx students enrolled in SFUSD high schools overall. These differences in program enrollment appear to be driven by the higher rates of participation of Black and Latinx students at Downtown and Latinx students at SFI. Similarly, fewer Asian and White students participate in HSPART relative to the overall SFUSD high school populations. HSPART programming also serves more English language learners, particularly at SFI, relative to the number of English language learners enrolled in SFUSD overall. Given characteristics of HSPART participants, there is promise that HSPART will promote equitable access to college and career readiness if students are receiving systematically high-quality services.

Exhibit 3 provides a snapshot of the characteristics of students who participated in HSPART programming at some point during their high school career. For school-specific demographics, see Appendix A.

Exhibit 3. Student Demographic Characteristics for All HSPART-Participating SFUSD High Schools, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	HSPART student participants	Non-HSPART students	SFUSD population at Non-HSPART schools
Total students	1,571	2,728	22,977
Grade level as of SY 2021–2022			
8th grade	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
9th grade	2.2%	22.1%	13.5%
10th grade	5.7%	16.9%	13.2%
11th grade	25.3%	6%	13.6%
12th grade	22.1%	8.8%	13.8%
13th grade	–	1.4%	0.4%
Graduated	29.1%	33.4%	32.4%
No longer enrolled/unknown	15.4%	10.7%	13.1%
Gender identity			
Female	44.1%	42.9%	47.9%
Male	55.9%	57%	52.1%
Nonbinary	–	Suppressed	< 1%
Racial/ethnic identity			
African American	11.3%	8.8%	6.2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	Suppressed	Suppressed	< 1%
Asian	26.7%	27.5%	47.1%
Declined to state	3.4%	2.4%	3.6%
Latinx	49%	51%	26.5%
Pacific Islander	3.1%	2.4%	< 1%
Two or more races	2.7%	2.9%	4.3%
White	3.4%	4.5%	11.2%
English learner status	33.7%	31.7%	16.4%
Special education status	15.1%	18%	14.3%
English spoken at home	33.9%	33.5%	43.5%

Note. HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; SY = school year; SFUSD = San Francisco United School District. Any cell for which n ≤ 20 was suppressed to protect student identity.

Although COVID-19-Related Restrictions Caused Changes in Program Delivery, Students Engaged in More HSPART Programming Over Time

A higher percentage of students first started participating in HSPART in SYs 2018–2019 and 2021–2022 compared to SYs 2019–2020 and 2020–2021. A smaller percentage of students participated in HSPART activities during the SYs most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (2019–2020 and 2020–2021). The decline in HSPART participation during these SYs reflects the reduced availability of work-based learning opportunities as students shifted to virtual learning and as previous sites implemented COVID-19-related restrictions. Interview respondents shared that programming in spring 2020 was significantly impacted by the pandemic since service providers were unable to host work-based learning activities that typically occurred during the spring semester. As a result of unexpected pandemic-related disruptions in SY 2019–2020,

HSPART staff needed to make many adjustments to how HSPART activities were delivered. This included identifying virtual or remote work-based learning opportunities for students, which continued after they returned to in-person instruction in spring 2021 (see Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4. Participation in HSPART Programming by SY of Initial Participation

	SY 2018–2019	SY 2019–2020	SY 2020–2021	SY 2021–2022
Total students enrolled in schools with HSPART programs	991	1,299	1,061	872
Students participating in HSPART programming	514 (52%)	258 (20%)	279 (26%)	523 (60%)

Note. HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; SY = school year.

While the number of students who participated was higher in the SYs before and after the COVID-19 pandemic began (2018–2019 and 2021–2022), the average number of hours that students engaged in programming increased over time, and so did the variability in participation hours.⁴ This variation may reflect the continued development of HSPART as program staff worked with school staff to build capacity for program activities (e.g., identifying opportunities to align HSPART activities with industry-specific academic pathways). SY 2018–2019 was the first year HSPART programs were implemented. HSPART programming likely expanded in subsequent years and became more embedded into the school day. The combination of these factors contributed to the increased amount of participation (see Exhibit 5; for school-specific demographics, see Appendix B).

Exhibit 5. Average Hours of Participation by SY of Enrollment for All HSPART Schools

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Hours in programming (M)	37	57	109	111
Grade level (M)				
8th Grade	–	8	–	15
9th Grade	40	77	81	14
10th Grade	10	65	92	107
11th Grade	48	53	146	114
12th Grade	23	15	17	143
Gender identity (M)				
Female	37	63	109	111
Male	38	52	108	111

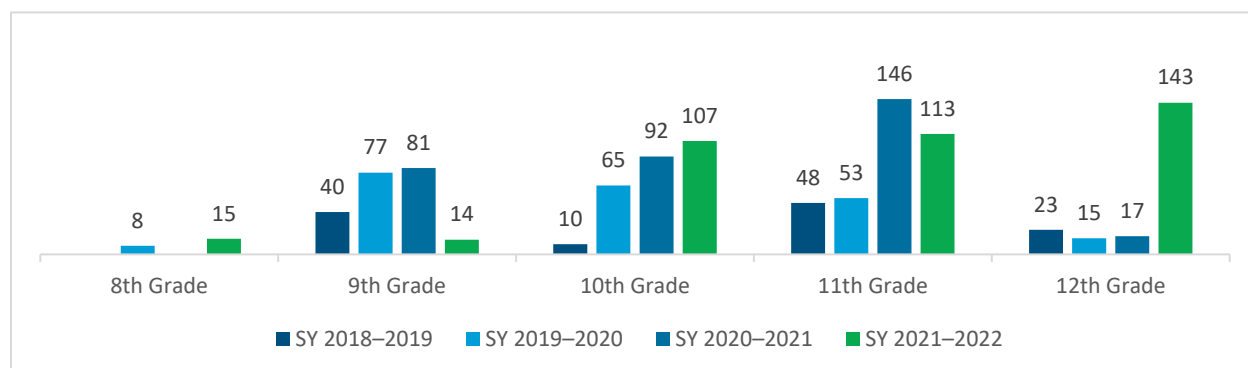
⁴ We examined hours of HSPART participation aggregated across all HSPART-participating schools and within each HSPART-participating school (Appendix B). For instance, we examined participation for students who began HSPART in SY 2018–2019, and we averaged their participation across 2018–2022. Similarly, we examined participation for students who began HSPART in SY 2019–2020 but did not participate in school year 2018–2019, and we averaged their participation across 2019–2022.

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Racial/ethnic identity (M)				
African American	25	42	95	117
American Indian or Alaskan Native	30	5	4	41
Asian	34	65	121	100
Latinx	43	56	110	118
Pacific Islander	22	21	23	94
White	47	86	136	76
Two or more races	25	85	120	128
Declined to state	34	50	61	98

Note. SY = school year; HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; M = sample mean.

The average number of hours that students engaged in programming differed by grade level and by SY. Students in Grades 10 and 11 spent the highest number of hours in HSPART programming and most consistently across years, followed by an uptick in 12th grader participation in SY 2021–2022 (see Exhibit 6). As the interviews revealed, some HSPART service providers expanded their programming to further support 12th graders in response to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic also led to increased opportunities for participation in virtual or remote work-based learning opportunities. HSPART participants’ increased access to program activities aligns with the uptick in the average number of hours that students engaged in programming across most grade levels. Additionally, for HSPART programs that offer internships, students typically complete their internship in 12th grade. With the hourly requirements for 12th grade participants, students could have higher HSPART engagement through their internships compared to other activities in earlier grades.

Exhibit 6. Average Hours of Participation by Year of HSPART Enrollment and Grade Level

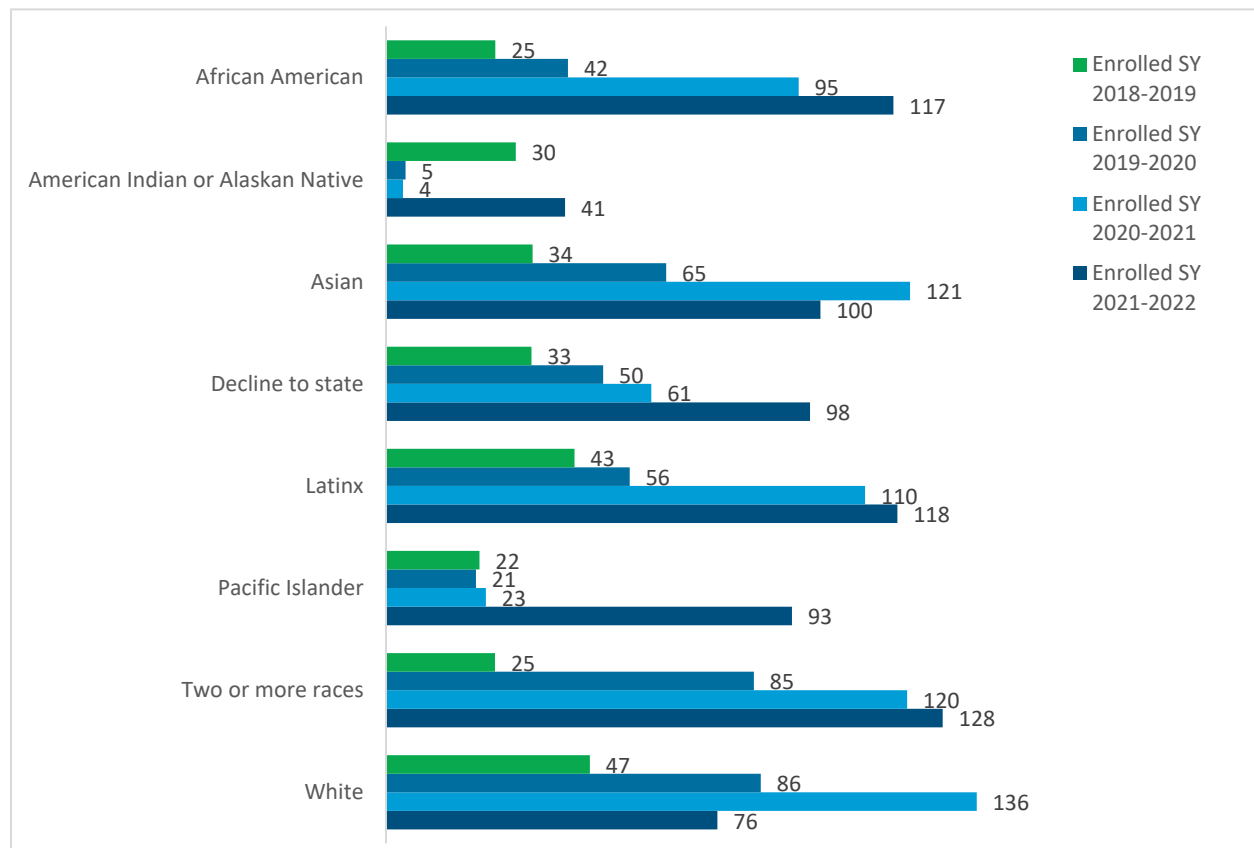


Note. SY = school year.

Across nearly all racial/ethnic groups, students spent more hours in programming in later years of HSPART implementation. Interview findings did not reveal evidence of variations in

participation across years based on students’ racial/ethnic backgrounds. However, administrative data reveal that the average hours of participation by year has progressively increased for most racial/ethnic groups. Participation initially decreased for American Indian or Alaskan Native students, though this may reflect the group’s relatively low levels of enrollment. White students are the only group that declined in participation in SY 2021–2022 (see Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7. Average Hours of Participation by Year of HSPART Enrollment and Race/Ethnicity



Note. HSPART = High School Partnership strategy; SY = school year.

How Do HSPART Programs Support Students in Preparing for Postsecondary Opportunities?

A central HSPART goal is to support students in developing career and college readiness skills. However, our interviews suggest that the HSPART programs at each school have structured the scope and sequence of activities with emphasis on career readiness with limited stress on college readiness. The programs provide students with opportunities to engage in a wide range of career readiness and exploration activities as well as in work-based learning activities. Respondents’ descriptions of the activities and opportunities that students are engaged in are reflective of the components of youth workforce programs discussed in the broader literature.

Exhibit 8 provides an overview of the types of opportunities HSPART provides at each school. As shown, while all HSPART programs provide some form of job readiness and career awareness and exploration activities, only three provide career exploration and training activities. In the following sections, we discuss how HSPART programs have implemented these activities.

Exhibit 8. Summary of Job Readiness and Work-Based Learning Activities by School

	O'Connell	Burton	SFI	Downtown
Job readiness				
Soft skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Job search	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Resume	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cover letter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interview skills/preparation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Financial literacy/management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Career awareness and exploration				
Guest speakers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Worksite visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job shadowing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learn about careers/occupations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Career preparation and training				
Internships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Note. O'Connell = John O'Connell High School; Burton = Phillip and Sala Burton Academic High School; SFI = San Francisco International High School; Downtown = Downtown High School. Soft skills are also often referred to as professional, employability, or interpersonal relationship skills. Interview skills/preparation may include participating in mock interviews.

Learning Job Readiness Skills Is Central to HSPART

All HSPART programs engage students in activities designed to facilitate their development of professional or soft skills. These activities are meant to help students develop communication skills, good work habits (e.g., timeliness), interpersonal and social skills (e.g., giving and receiving feedback, managing conflict), and other professional abilities that can enhance their performance and success in the workplace. HSPART covers topics such as navigating the workplace, self-advocacy, communicating via email, and code switching. Students said that some of the activities have helped them think about how they interact with others.

“[The trainings] told you a lot about skills needed for certain jobs for interacting with others. . . . It was a video, and it was showing passive aggressiveness and how to spot it in workplaces and what to do and who to go to [if someone] makes you uncomfortable.” – HSPART student

Besides soft skills, the HSPART programs teach students skills to prepare them to search and apply for jobs. Specifically, these activities include learning how to create a resume and cover letter, develop interviewing skills, use LinkedIn, and understand financial literacy. One respondent said that while it is great that students can learn how to do these things, it would be better if they got something tangible at the end of program. For instance, the respondent suggested that in addition to teaching students about what goes on a resume, they should have the opportunity to craft their own. Doing so would provide them with a tangible product that they could use to apply for jobs. Students also discussed how the program has helped them think about financial matters in college and throughout their careers.

“They also taught us about banking [and] bank accounts. Just how to save our money and how to make money . . . how you find a job, or how you [find] an internship to get some money and [HSPART staff] teach you how to save your money.” – HSPART student

As described earlier, career readiness and preparation activities are offered during the school day in most schools. At O’Connell, 1 day a week is dedicated to career readiness skills. A respondent at one school believes that integration of these lessons into the regular coursework encourages students to take it more seriously. At Downtown, HSPART program staff offer job readiness workshops both during school (i.e., lunch time) and after. In this school, student attendance at the career readiness workshops were optional. To promote attendance, HSPART staff at Downtown offer students a monetary incentive. By finding opportunities to expand access to HSPART activities and encouraging students to participate through incentives, HSPART staff increase access to resources that can further advance students’ readiness and preparation for postsecondary opportunities. However, student engagement challenges remain for HSPART programs not structured to incentivize students to attend activities outside of the classroom.

“I think the fact that we are part of the school day makes [engagement] less of a challenge because the students do view it as part of their school day. They’re going to be receiving a grade. . . I think because of that, students do engage in it more. I do think students look at that course differently than the rest of their courses. So at times, [they might say], ‘I don’t need to take this as serious.’ We’ve kind of seen that over the years, and as we’ve gotten better integrated with the pathways and the teachers [have become] more involved, that’s definitely lessened.” – HSPART program staff

HSPART Programming Provides Career Awareness through Guest Speakers and Self-Paced Research and Reflection on Postsecondary Work, Education Opportunities, and Experiential Learning through Worksite Visits and Job Shadowing

HSPART programs include career awareness and exploration activities that range in level and intensity. These career awareness and exploration activities are designed to provide students

with opportunities to connect with individuals in target industries and help students better understand available career options. Examples of such activities include the following:

- **Guest speakers.** The HSPART programs at Burton and O’Connell invite speakers to speak to students about their careers and workplaces. Speakers visit either during class or lunch. Frequently, speakers are selected based on the specific academic pathway or area of special focus for the school. For example, one respondent said that HSPART provided career exploration activities for underrepresented students in certain careers.
- **Worksite visits.** Students at Burton, O’Connell, and SFI can participate in visits to workplaces. HSPART staff attempt to organize visits that align with pathways or industries of focus to ensure that the experiences are connected to students’ interests and class-based activities. Students said that they enjoyed observing the day-to-day work of some of the careers discussed in HSPART programming. Although the worksite visits were short (e.g., 1–2 days), the hands-on experience provided students a deeper understanding of a range of career options.
- **Job shadow.** The HSPART program at Burton offers students the opportunity to job shadow a professional in their work setting (see sidebar). The job shadow provides students with the chance to make connections with a potential employer and observe someone in a work setting. Job shadowing can help students better understand what the career involves and whether it is something they may be interested in.
- **Investigating career options and goals.** These activities are generally aimed at helping students better understand what types of careers are available in a specific industry and/or at helping them articulate career goals. The HSPART program at SFI coordinates with the school’s college and career class to help students identify career interests and goals. Downtown’s HSPART program engages students in career-related activities through workshops or one-on-one support during which students perform in-depth research on a specific industry of interest and its job market.

Week without Walls

At Burton, there is a full week—called Week without Walls—dedicated to career readiness and exploration activities. During the first 2 days, students participate in activities aimed at enhancing their job readiness, such as writing a resume, taking part in mock interviews, and learning public speaking skills. During the next 2 days, students participate in job shadows. The job shadow opportunity is aligned with the academy that students are in. For instance, if students are in the health science academy, their job shadow placement may be in a medical setting. On the final day, students participate in a symposium during which they share their job shadow experiences and what they learned during the week.

“[HSPART staff] help you communicate more and make more connections because they teach you how to network your way into different positions that you want.” – HSPART student

HSPART programs help students connect career interests to postsecondary education options, such as college and trade school. For example, at SFI, students spend 2 weeks learning about postsecondary education options related to potential careers of interest. They explore options for college as well as trade school. During this time, the service provider works with students to consider factors (e.g., costs, areas of study, campus culture) related to higher education. After broad conversations about college and trade school, students conduct their own in-depth research into specific institutions and present their findings to the class. The exercise helps students learn about different pathways for entering their career of interest.

HSPART programs prioritize career exploration activities for 10th and 11th graders, with additional support given to 12th graders as necessary. According to interview respondents, 11th grade is an essential time for students to consider postsecondary options. As such, there is a focus on targeted career exploration for 11th grade students. At O’Connell and SFI, career awareness and exploration activities build toward an internship opportunity or a capstone in senior year. Downtown, O’Connell, and SFI also provide career exploration activities to 12th graders. Expanding access to HSPART services as students approach the end of their secondary education increases equitable access to resources that can aid in transitions from high school. For example, students at SFI said that after they complete the service provider’s 11th grade HSPART programming, they continue to take advantage of career exploration activities during their senior year in preparation for college.

Reflective activities are embedded in all HSPART activities. HSPART staff across schools engage students in reflecting on career exploration activities. For example, Downtown requires students to complete a reflection guide at the end of each workshop to receive credit for attendance and participation. The guide asks students to describe what they expected from the workshop, what they learned from it, what they valued from the information presented, what they need to reach their goals after it, and what they will do as a result of attending it. Similarly, students at O’Connell complete a reflective debrief after each career rotation or job shadow. Providing opportunities for students to engage in reflective practices allows them to deepen their understanding and connection to HSPART. This reflective approach is encouraged for students engaged in experiential learning activities (Gamboa et al., 2013; Porfeli et al., 2012).

Many HSPART Students Have Opportunities to Participate in Internships, though the Placements Do Not Always Align with Their Career Interests

HSPART programs at Downtown, O’Connell, and SFI provide students with the opportunity to participate in an internship. The internship requirements vary across HSPART programs:

- Students at Downtown can participate in paid off-campus internships, working for up to 70 hours. The internships take place during the school day. Once a week, students are required to participate in success and retention workshops as part of their internship experience.

Topics covered include students' internship experiences, how to deal with difficult situations on the job, and workplace communication. Students receive a stipend for completing their internship hours and attending program-related workshops.

- Students at O'Connell can participate in 3–4-week workplace rotation in 11th grade and an 8-week internship placement in 12th grade. Students work at their internship placement for 1 full day during the school week. The internships typically align with students' pathways.

“After high school, I want to [go into] aerospace mechanical engineering, and I already know how to do some stuff, like welding, and [I'm interested in] just mastering my skills like that. I feel like [the internship is going to] really help me get myself to where I want to go.” – HSPART student

- Students at SFI can participate in a 10-week, 40-hour internship. Typically, they work 2 days a week for 2 hours a day. As of spring 2023, the program was placing students in teaching assistant or administrative roles in school settings (e.g., main office, study hall sessions). Prior to the pandemic, some students completed off-site internships. They receive a monetary incentive for completing requirements.

While students at Burton do not have formal internship placements during the school year, they do receive support in connecting with internship opportunities during the summer.

HSPART programs across all schools attempt to place students in internships that are aligned with their career interest and/or academic pathway—an integral aspect of high-quality work-based learning experiences (Ross et al., 2020). However, it is not always possible to do so. For example, students at Downtown do not have industry-specific internship opportunities. Instead, HSPART provides them with any available work experience, including retail positions, gardening, food services, and administrative work. Additionally, as previously described, the loss of institutional knowledge due to staff turnover has contributed to difficulties in securing enough internship hosts in specific industries. As a result, HSPART program staff must sometimes place students in internships outside their career interests or academic pathways.

Students are most excited about work-based learning opportunities that closely align with their interests. Focus group participants recognized that internship placements did not always align with student interests and recommended that HSPART staff continue to include student interests throughout the placement process. One student commented on the importance of students liking their internship:

“I think one recommendation that I would give [students] is to try to make sure that they are getting into an internship that they might like. Not just location and timing—all of that stuff is important, but if you don't like something it will be difficult to do it.” – HSPART student

However, some students also see the value of participating in opportunities that may not be directly related to their career interests. One student shared:

“For my internship and my [intended college] major, it’s very different because my internship was a teacher assistant, but my [intended college] major is computer science. But that’s one thing that’s really helpful. The subject I was helping was math because it’s really helpful for computer science. That’s a lot of coding.” – HSPART student

In addition to teaching students’ career readiness skills, HSPART program staff take several other steps to prepare students and industry partners for the internships. These include:

- **Ensuring students have the appropriate paperwork or documentation.** Before starting their internship, students may need to provide a range of paperwork, such as resumes and right-to-work documents. For example, HSPART staff at Downtown help students gather their right-to-work documents, including their birth certificate, social security card, and a California ID or driver’s license. One respondent shared that securing right-to-work documents can be a barrier for some students interested in completing an off-site internship with a retail store or administrative office, especially if they were not born in the United States. Without this paperwork, paid work-based learning opportunities might be limited for students participating in this program. Although HSPART staff try to find alternative placements for students who have trouble collecting right-to-work documents, equity implications emerge if some placements are paid when others are not.
- **Assessing students’ readiness for internships.** To assess students’ readiness, HSPART staff may speak with their teachers and/or review their interest and intake assessments. For students who have multiple barriers—such as limited English proficiency or limited knowledge of how to navigate the city’s transportation system—it may be difficult to find an internship placement that can provide them with the needed supports. HSPART staff support students who may not be ready for an internship by further developing their career readiness skills or addressing other barriers. For example, one respondent shared that they often support newcomer students who have limited English proficiency by offering services such as vocational or conversational English workshops. Similarly, to alleviate transportation barriers, Downtown’s HSPART program focuses on identifying placements that are along a bus line from the school or within walking distance, as previously described. Another school allows students to complete on-site work-based learning activities during a class period twice per week (post-2020). The extent to which HSPART can mitigate barriers to internship participation has equity implications for the types of placements accessible to all students.
- **Setting expectations with employers.** HSPART staff shared that they try to coach their employer partners on how to work with youth. For example, HSPART staff at O’Connell and

SFI hold prep or orientation sessions with employers. The service provider at O’Connell also offers a supervisor handbook that summarizes internship expectations. Supporting supervisors with understanding how to work with and manage students reflects practices that many youth workforce development programs use. For example, YouthBuild Philly and Year Up support internship supervisors using tools such as coaching, feedback, and orientation (Fein & Hamadyk, 2018; Weissbour & Newman, 2020). Supporting internship supervisors in this way can help them work with and engage young people more effectively. Furthermore, given the population of students that HSPART programs serve, it is important to ensure that employer partners are prepared to provide supportive, inclusive, and safe work settings. YouthBuild Philly, for instance, provides employer partner staff with coaching and feedback to promote practices that foster a supportive culture based on respect and belonging (Weissbour & Newman, 2020). While our interviews indicate that HSPART programs recognize the importance of helping employer partners understand how to work with students, they also suggest that there is limited emphasis on preparing partners for the unique considerations of HSPART’s student populations.

Each HSPART program incorporates student interests and industry partner availability and capacity into the internship placement process as much as possible. For example, one HSPART program holds a gallery walk at the beginning of the spring semester. During this event, students can review job descriptions and get more information about different internship opportunities. Employers who are interested in interviewing potential student interns are also able to do so during the event. In contrast, O’Connell’s HSPART program asks students to complete a survey in the fall semester about the types of careers they are interested in exploring. HSPART staff then try to secure internship opportunities that align with students’ interests. Then, early in the spring semester, students’ express interest in available internship opportunities and make a case for why they should be selected for the internship. HSPART staff frame this experience as akin to what students might experience in a competitive job market.

“We tell the students, ‘Some of the things you have to keep in mind are “Just like a job, it’s competitive.” You may not get the site that you want. You may not get a site that is in an area of interest that aligns with you, but maybe the skills that you develop will be best suited for development for your career trajectory that you’re envisioning.’” – HSPART staff

To support students during their internship, HSPART staff have processes to facilitate communication between staff, students, and employer hosts. These include maintaining regular communication with the industry partners in the form of visits to the worksite or check-in calls. In addition to informal feedback, SFI’s HSPART program requires internship supervisors to give weekly feedback on students’ performance and complete an evaluation form at the end of the internship. HSPART staff at O’Connell solicit formal feedback on student performance

from internship supervisors through an assessment (see sidebar). The HSPART staff convey to students that the assessments are reflective of yearly evaluations they may receive at a real job. Moving forward, the HSPART staff will ask students to complete a self-assessment focused on the same competency areas.

HSPART staff try to ensure that there are supports at the internship site and inform students about points of contact for additional help. For example, one respondent shared that they make an intentional effort to identify and recruit employers who have the language ability to support students with limited English proficiency. Service providers also help students identify adults they can talk to should a problem arise during their internship experience.

Assessing Student Internship Performance

The HSPART program at O’Connell asks internship supervisors to assess students’ performance and growth during the internship using an assessment form. The assessment is focused on six areas of competency: reliability and dependability, speaking and communicating, persistence and motivation, initiative and self-direction, critical thinking and problem-solving, and self-advocacy. Supervisors complete the assessment at multiple points during the internship experience. The service provider is then able to use the information to identify supports students may need.

“they give us numbers of people that we can text, so we can go to them to talk. . . . If it’s a problem or something . . . we can ask our supervisor, but if there’s something bigger, I will talk to [the HSPART service provider staff at my school].” – HSPART student

HSPART program staff have found it difficult to secure internships that align with students’ interests. Interview responses suggest that there are few key challenges. First, industry partners have had limited capacity to host students since the pandemic. Second, as previously described, HSPART staff turnover has also impacted coordination with industry partners. Third, interview respondents shared that changes in memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and the process of getting employers approved can pose barriers. For example, one respondent noted that the steps required to get an employer approved by SFUSD can be burdensome for internships compared to other activities. Because some students are at their internships during the school day, employer partners must sign an MOU with SFUSD along with any MOUs they sign with service providers. Employer partners also need to complete additional steps, such as ensuring they have a certificate of insurance and receiving the SFUSD Board of Education’s approval. The lengthy process can be a deterrent to employers, especially small businesses.

“I think a lot of the paperwork is also very intimidating for some of the smaller businesses because it’s a lot of legal language that they may not be comfortable with signing.” – Service provider staff

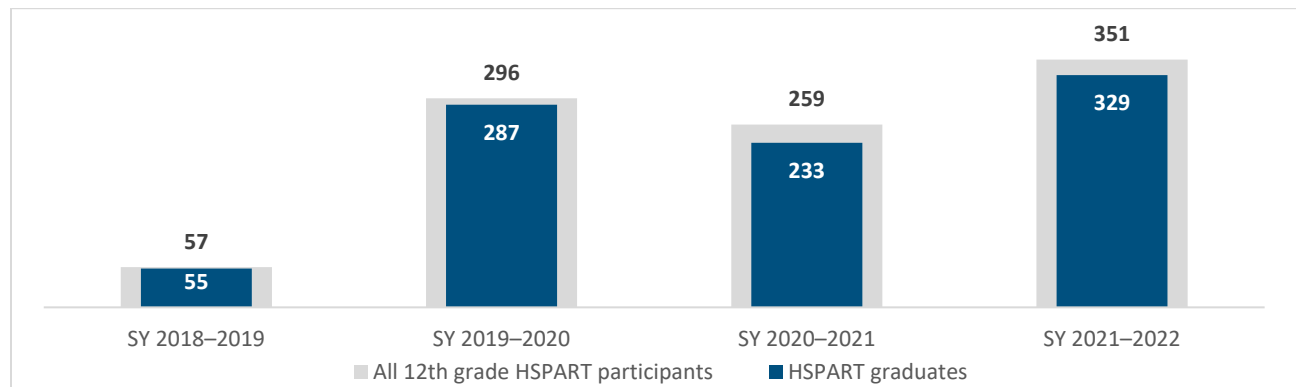
The service provider also said that SFUSD has a list of previously approved employers; however, HSPART service providers are not able to access the list. Having access could help service providers better identify and recruit employer partners that have already been approved and

may be aligned with student interests. Furthermore, service providers could leverage the pool of pre-vetted employers to increase the availability of internships appropriate for English language learners and students with transportation or other participation barriers.

Most HSPART Participants Graduate High School, and Graduation Rates Are Consistent

Across all HSPART-participating schools, we examined graduation outcomes for 12th grade students who participated in HSPART programming at any time in high school. Although interview respondents provided anecdotal descriptions of students' graduation outcomes, findings from an analysis of HSPART administrative data provide evidence of graduation rates since HSPART programs received DCYF funding. We found that most students graduate and that graduation rates were similar across SYs (see Exhibit 9); graduation rates were similar among HSPART students and the overall SFUSD population (see Appendix C, Exhibit C–1).

Exhibit 9. Twelfth Grade Graduates Out of All 12th Grade Students at HSPART Schools

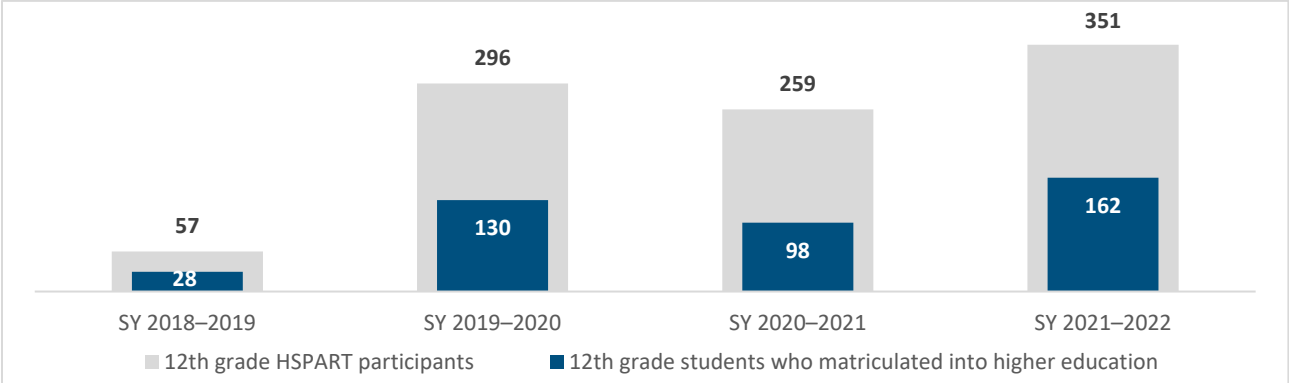


Note. HSPART = High School Partnership strategy; SY = school year. Across all SYs (2018–2022), 904 twelfth grade students graduated out of 963 (93.9%). In SY 2018–2019, 55 twelfth grade students graduated out of 57 (96.5%). In SY 2019–2020, 287 twelfth grade students graduated out of 296 (97%). In SY 2020–2021, 233 twelfth grade students graduated out of 259 (90% graduation rate). In SY 2021–2022, 329 twelfth grade students graduated out of 351 (93.7%).

Most HSPART Participants Do Not Enroll in Higher Education; Rates Are Higher for the Overall SFUSD Population

Across all HSPART-participating schools, we examined higher education matriculation for 12th grade students who participated in HSPART programming at any time in high school. We found that half or less than half of students matriculated into higher education in the fall following 12th grade (see Exhibit 10). This is in contrast to the rest of the SFUSD population, for which the higher education matriculation rate was 68% on average across the evaluation period (see Appendix C, Exhibit C–2). The rate of higher education matriculation was lowest for HSPART students in SY 2020–2021 and consistent across years for the rest of the SFUSD population.

Exhibit 10. Twelfth Grade Students Matriculating into Higher Education Out of All 12th Grade Students at HSPART-Participating Schools



Note. HSPART = High School Partnership strategy; SY = school year. Across all SYs (2018–2022), 445 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 963 (46.2%). In SY 2018–2019, 28 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 57 (49.1%). In SY 2019–2020, 130 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 296 (43.9%). In SY 2020–2021, 98 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 259 (37.8%). In SY 2021–2022, 162 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 351 (46.2%). Rates represent matriculation into higher education in the fall following high school graduation.

Discussion and Future Directions

In this report, we have presented findings on the current implementation of HSPART programs by three service providers across four high schools in SFUSD. Overall, the structure and design of HSPART programs across high schools incorporate a range of approaches and activities that contribute to students’ college and career readiness. In the following section, we discuss our study’s findings and limitations as well as future directions for HSPART programming.

Discussion of Findings

Although most HSPART programs are successfully embedded in the school day, there is a need for increased alignment between HSPART programming and academic coursework. Interview responses revealed that there are opportunities for HSPART activities to become more closely aligned with the classroom content provided by school-based staff. Increasing the alignment and integration of HSPART’s work-based learning activities and students’ regular coursework will better encourage students to make connections between academic content and its real-world applications. Increasing the alignment will require the proactive and intentional engagement of classroom teachers, as they are best positioned to help students make the connections (Warner et al., 2019). Currently, the alignment between HSPART and academic pathways is reflected in the selection of guest speakers and, when available, work-based learning opportunities in careers associated with students’ coursework. However, as pandemic-related challenges demonstrated, such alignment in providing work-based learning

opportunities for some industries (e.g., health sciences) has been limited. Aligning academic coursework with career readiness and work-based learning activities would require more intentional collaborative work between HSPART and school-based staff, including lesson plan development, organization of off-site rotations, and work-based learning placements. Additionally, HSPART activities such as resume development and other career readiness materials could be better integrated during the school day in industry-aligned courses students take outside of HSPART programming. This would require HSPART staff to move beyond largely informing school-based staff of upcoming events toward codeveloping a scope and sequence of HSPART activities that align with school-based staff's curricula for industry-aligned courses.

Overall, key components of HSPART programs align with practices highlighted in the youth workforce development literature. HSPART programs provide students with opportunities to develop job readiness skills and participate in activities across the work-based learning continuum. In some schools, work-based learning experiences are sequenced to provide students with general awareness of career options and help them move over time to preparation and training in specific careers. Service providers also contextualize experiences to help students better connect what they are learning through HSPART to their potential future workplace/careers. For example, service providers model and teach students about practices and behaviors, such as what to do if you need to a sick day and what it means to dress professionally, so that students may experience these concepts in the workplace and understand why they are important. In this way, students can develop knowledge of and expertise in the transferrable skills that employers seek (Cahill, 2016).

While many HSPART program components reflect best practices, our findings suggest that there remain growth areas that would help strengthen youths' connections to careers and postsecondary options. They include the following:

- **Forging stronger relationships with employer partners to increase available internship opportunities.** Our findings indicate that HSPART programs have difficulty establishing partnerships with employers who are aligned with career areas of interest to students. The experiences of HSPART's service providers are not uncommon. Workforce development programs face many challenges when engaging partners, including employers not understanding the value of engaging with the program, their lack of time and resources to meaningfully participate, and their wariness of working with the populations served (Barnow & Spaulding, 2015). To mitigate employers' barriers to engagement, Spaulding and Martin-Caughey (2015) suggested building deeper relationships with employer partners through sustained involvement in a wider range of activities. Employer partners involved in one-off activities are less likely to become highly engaged with the program. Partners involved in multiple aspects of program delivery are more highly engaged and may be more

willing to offer multiple internship opportunities. Our interviews suggest that this deeper level of engagement may not be happening. HSPART programs do not appear to be using systematic approaches to recruiting and building relationships with employer partners. However, we do acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic might have impacted the extent to which employers were willing and able to engage in HSPART. Additionally, we were able to interview only a limited number of partners. A closer examination is needed to fully understand the depth of partnerships.

- **Providing work-based learning experiences, particularly internships, that are more closely connected with student’s career interests and goals.** Ross et al. (2020) suggested that characteristics of high-quality work-based learning experiences include alignment with students’ career goals, supports for career planning, and the performance of meaningful tasks aligned with related industries and occupational standards. While the services providers do attempt to align internship opportunities with students’ career interests, our findings indicate that interest-aligned internships are not available to all students. Due to challenges with recruiting employer partners, students may need to settle for whatever internship placement is available. Early work experiences of any kind can help students build job readiness skills; however, a lack of alignment with students’ interests may hinder their ability to fully understand possible career pathways and assess their interest in pursuing further training and education.

HSPART programs enhance the high school experience by increasing opportunities for historically underserved students to prepare for postsecondary experiences. Across all HSPART-participating schools, a greater number of Black, Latinx, and English language learner students participated in HSPART compared to those enrolled in SFUSD high schools overall. Students participating in HSPART activities benefitted from career exploration and work-based learning opportunities being embedded in the school setting. From mandatory grade-level participation to designated days of the week when students can engage in off-site work-based learning opportunities, HSPART programs provide students opportunities to learn more about careers of interest as part of their high school experience. By supporting students’ career readiness through internships that align with their academic interests, offering paid work experiences, and developing job marketing materials for future employment, HSPART programs increase opportunities for students of color to thrive, strengthen their awareness of available career opportunities, and enhance postsecondary life outcomes.

Furthermore, job readiness and work-based learning opportunities provide students from disadvantaged backgrounds with opportunities to build relationships with professionals in career fields of interest. Ross et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of building social networks and social capital through work-based learning experiences for students of color and

students from low-income backgrounds. “Work-based learning places young people in situations where they interact with a variety of adults and are exposed to different occupations and careers, which can provide new sources of information, assistance, and encouragement that help young people with their educational and employment choices” (p. 17). The social networks that students build have the potential to positively influence their career trajectories and lead to meaningful career opportunities. Students from more privileged backgrounds are able to organically develop such connections through their parents and other family members.

However, there are still important equity considerations that need to be further examined and addressed, including the following:

- **Limited access to meaningful internship placements that align with career interests for some students.** Our findings reveal that the internship options aligning with students’ career interests are sometimes limited. The options are further limited for students with barriers to participation, such as English language learners and students who have difficulty securing the appropriate paperwork (e.g., state ID, driver’s license, birth certificate). As noted earlier, some students may not be able to participate in internship placements because service providers are not able to identify employers who can provide them with the necessary supports and accommodations. The lack of meaningful internship placements can lead to disparities in students’ work-based learning experiences.
- **Lack of translated materials needed to increase awareness about HSPART among families whose primary language is not English.** Many of the HSPART staff we interviewed discussed how communications related to the program are often shared with families through district-driven mechanisms, such as school newsletters. Outreach materials to families are primarily available in English. Because English language learner students are a key target demographic for HSPART programming, this may present a challenge for students and their families whose primary language is not English. Service providers acknowledged that providing outreach documents in multiple languages would be something to consider for future implementation while also acknowledging that financial and organizational resources are limited. The limited capacity for translational services across all programs remains a challenge to ensuring that students and families are aware of available work-based learning opportunities and the necessary processes for fully engaging in those activities.
- **HSPART service providers and schools should be mindful about continuing to provide students with exposure to a range of postsecondary options, including work, higher education, and trade school.** The proportion of Black and Latinx students who participate in HSPART programming (particularly at Downtown and SFI) is higher than in SFUSD overall. This demonstrates that HSPART programs are focused on supporting historically underserved students in preparing for a variety of future opportunities depending on their

interests. However, Black and Latinx students are typically underrepresented in higher education, and gaps are continuing to widen (Ashkenas et al., 2017). Emphasizing work-based opportunities without a similar emphasis on access to and preparation for higher education may unintentionally recapitulate existing barriers to higher education participation for Black and Latinx students. Some HSPART programs incorporated college-focused activities in their scope and sequence. However, interview responses related to college exploration activities as components of HSPART were limited. Further examination into the discourse about higher education and other pathways to careers within HSPART and the broader school context is needed to better understand the equity implications.

Limitations

This study highlights themes raised by students, service provider staff, and school staff about their perceptions of the DCYF-funded HSPART programs in SFUSD. Although the themes are based on findings from qualitative data (i.e., interviews and focus groups) and quantitative administrative data from SY 2018–2019 to present, it is important to note that data collection efforts for this project occurred during SY 2022–2023. Because of the timing of the programming, we used program documents to identify how HSPART programmatic elements might have evolved since DCYF funds were awarded. This includes attempts to accurately characterize the design and structure of HSPART programs prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, a time that HSPART service provider leaders and program staff noted as a significant disruption in program implementation.

Future HSPART Directions

With the successes and challenges identified, there are several areas where current and future HSPART service providers can expand their scope of work to maximize student outcomes.

- **Consider the level and intensity of the work-based learning experiences available to students.** As described in the findings, current HSPART programs vary in structure. Thus, there is a range of work-based learning experiences available at each participating school. Future service providers should consider how to structure work-based learning experiences to help students discover and learn about careers that are more closely aligned with their academic pathways. Specifically, service providers should identify ways to ensure that the available job shadowing, rotations, and internships align with students' academic pathway and/or career interests. For example, teaching assistant positions could be designated for students who are interested in education. Additionally, the intensity of HSPART work-based learning experiences or the frequency of such opportunities should also be considered for future programming. Our findings have demonstrated that some programs offer more intense experiences (e.g., 70-hour internships) compared to others (e.g., weekly rotations of

guest speakers or site visits). By designing work-based learning experiences of varying levels and intensities, HSPART programs could better serve students' needs and interests.

- **Develop systems for tracking student outcomes in collaboration with school-based staff.** Across interviews, HSPART service provider staff provided anecdotal evidence of how program participation has led some students to pursue careers in areas related to their high school work-based learning experiences. Interview respondents also shared information about graduates attending college in preparation for a career that aligned with their academic pathway. However, interview responses did not reveal evidence of systematic efforts to track students' postsecondary outcomes after HSPART participation. By developing a system for tracking student outcomes, service providers could build evidence of the impact of program components on students' postsecondary outcomes. When asked about the possibility of developing such a tracking system, service providers mentioned that there may be challenges related to capacity for continued communication with students after they leave high school. However, school-based staff at some schools expressed interest in supporting service providers in follow-ups with students after high school. Therefore, service providers should consider how they can leverage school staff and other district resources to track the postsecondary outcomes of former HSPART participants.
- **In collaboration with school-based staff, incorporate higher education and other career-entry pathways as key components of work-based learning experiences.** Since students at some of the participating high schools were assigned to industry-specific academic pathways, some HSPART service providers discussed the alignment between students' academic coursework and their work-based learning opportunities. However, there was little discussion about how HSPART activities might align with students' higher education aspirations. For the academic pathways that focused on careers such as building and construction or information technology, students and school-based staff discussed alternative routes to these careers, such as attending a trade school. By collaborating with school-based staff, HSPART service providers could further incorporate information about multiple pathways to careers students are interested in. For example, students could explore careers they are interested in, identify the different pathways (e.g., college, trade school, apprenticeship), and explore the costs and benefits of each. Activities such as this would allow students to build a deeper understanding of the different paths they can take.

Overall, HSPART aims to provide students with opportunities to participate in career exposure and work-based learning experiences. This study identified areas of success for the program's implementation as well as challenges to advancing equity for participants of all racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The study also identified opportunities to further incorporate equity-based strategies to support students' meaningful exposure to work-based learning opportunities embedded within the school day.

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Appendix A. Characteristics of Program Participants by School

Note that due to student transferring, attriting, or graduating from High School Partnerships strategy (HSPART) schools throughout 2018–2022, the sum of students across each participating school does not equal to the number of students reported at the HSPART-aggregate level. Any cell for which $n \leq 20$ was suppressed to protect student identity.

Exhibit A–1. Average Student Demographic Characteristics for Philip and Sala Burton High School, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	HSPART student participants	Non-HSPART students	SFUSD population at non-HSPART schools
Total students participating in HSPART programming	705 (34%)	1,369 (66%)	22,977
Grade level as of SY 2021–2022			
8th Grade	–	–	Suppressed
9th Grade	Suppressed	20%	13.5%
10th Grade	4.1%	18%	13.2%
11th Grade	33.8%	5%	13.6%
12th Grade	23.4%	11.6%	13.8%
13th Grade	–	–	0.4%
Graduated	22.3%	29.9%	32.4%
No longer enrolled/unknown	15.3%	13.6%	13.1%
Gender identity			
Female	47.5%	43.2%	47.9%
Male	52.5%	56.7%	52%
Nonbinary	–	Suppressed	0.1%
Racial/ethnic identity			
African American	9.9%	8.8%	6.2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	Suppressed	Suppressed	0.3%
Asian	44.1%	42.6%	47.1%
Declined to state	Suppressed	2.5%	3.6%
Latinx	34.3%	35.6%	26.5%
Pacific Islander	4.1%	3.9%	0.7%
Two or more races	3.1%	3.7%	4.3%
White	Suppressed	2.7%	11.2%
English learner status	16.7%	21.3%	16.4%
Special education status	13.8%	18.8%	14.3%
English spoken at home	37.4%	40.2%	43.5%

Note. HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; SFUSD = San Francisco United School District; SY = school year.

Exhibit A–2. Average Student Demographic Characteristics for Downtown High School, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	HSPART student participants	Non-HSPART students	SFUSD population at non-HSPART schools
Total students participating in HSPART programming	261 (56.2%)	203 (43.8%)	22,977
Grade level as of SY 2021–2022			
8th Grade	–	–	Suppressed
9th Grade	Suppressed	Suppressed	13.5%
10th Grade	Suppressed	Suppressed	13.2%
11th Grade	8.8%	9.9%	13.6%
12th Grade	25.7%	11.8%	13.8%
13th Grade	–	–	0.4%
Graduated	44.1%	57.1%	32.4%
No longer enrolled/unknown	16.5%	13.8%	13.1%
Gender identity			
Female	44.4%	33.0%	47.9%
Male	55.6%	67%	52%
Nonbinary	–	–	0.1%
Racial/ethnic identity			
African American	28.4%	21.2%	6.2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	Suppressed	Suppressed	0.3%
Asian	Suppressed	Suppressed	47.1%
Declined to state	Suppressed	Suppressed	3.6%
Latinx	49.8%	57.6%	26.5%
Pacific Islander	7.7%	Suppressed	0.7%
Two or more races	Suppressed	Suppressed	4.3%
White	Suppressed	Suppressed	11.2%
English learner status	18%	26.6%	16.4%
Special education status	25.7%	28.1%	14.3%
English spoken at home	62.5%	50.2%	43.5%

Note. HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; SFUSD = San Francisco United School District; SY = school year.

Exhibit A–3. Average Student Demographic Characteristics for International High School, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	HSPART student participants	Non-HSPART students	SFUSD population at non-HSPART schools
Total students participating in HSPART programming	318 (35.8%)	570 (64.2%)	22,977
Grade level as of SY 2021–2022			
8th Grade	Suppressed	Suppressed	Suppressed
9th Grade	7.6%	35.8%	13.5%
10th Grade	8.2%	17.4%	13.2%
12th Grade	17.6%	Suppressed	13.8%
13th Grade	–	Suppressed	0.4%
Graduated	29.9%	33.2%	32.4%
No longer enrolled/unknown	17.3%	4.7%	13.1%
Gender identity			
Female	39.9%	38.4%	47.9%
Male	60.1%	61.4%	52%
Nonbinary	–	Suppressed	0.1%
Racial/ethnic identity			
African American	Suppressed	Suppressed	6.2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	–	–	0.3%
Asian	18.6%	14.7%	47.1%
Declined to state	Suppressed	Suppressed	3.6%
Latinx	69.8%	77.0%	6.5%
Pacific Islander	–	Suppressed	0.7%
Two or more races	–	–	4.3%
White	7.6%	5.6%	11.2%
English learner status	92.1%	60.0%	16.4%
Special education status	Suppressed	Suppressed	14.3%
English spoken at home	Suppressed	Suppressed	43.5%

Note. HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; SFUSD = San Francisco United School District; SY = school year.

Exhibit A–4. Average Student Demographic Characteristics for John O’Connell High School, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	HSPART student participants	Non-HSPART students	SFUSD population at non-HSPART schools
Total students participating in HSPART programming	363 (36.9%)	620 (63.1%)	22,977
Grade level as of SY 2021–2022			
8th Grade	–	–	Suppressed
9th Grade	–	19.7%	13.5%
10th Grade	7.4%	17.9%	13.2%
11th Grade	25.3%	11.8%	13.6%
12th Grade	24.8%	8.2%	13.8%
13th Grade	–	Suppressed	0.4%
Graduated	29.5%	31.9%	32.4%
No longer enrolled/unknown	12.9%	9.4%	13.1%
Gender identity			
Female	42.4%	49%	47.9%
Male	57.6%	51%	52%
Nonbinary	–	–	0.1%
Racial/ethnic identity			
African American	12.9%	12.9%	6.2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native			0.3%
Asian	11.9%	11.3%	47.1%
Declined to state	Suppressed	Suppressed	3.6%
Latinx	61.4%	59.7%	26.5%
Pacific Islander	Suppressed	Suppressed	0.7%
Two or more races	Suppressed	3.7%	4.3%
White	Suppressed	8.2%	11.2%
English learner status	26.4%	30.5%	16.4%
Special education status	21.5%	26.8%	14.3%
English spoken at home	20.9%	23.5%	43.5%

Note. HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; SFUSD = San Francisco United School District; SY = school year.

Appendix B. Program-Participation Patterns by School

We examined hours of High School Partnerships strategy (HSPART) participation, aggregated across all HSPART-participating schools and within each HSPART-participating school. For instance, we examined participation for students who began HSPART in School Year (SY) 2018–2019, and we averaged their participation across 2018–2022. Similarly, we examined participation for students who began HSPART in SY 2019–2020 but did not participate in SY 2018–2019, and we averaged their participation across SYs 2019–2022.

Exhibit B–1. Student Participation Hours by SY of Enrollment for All HSPART Schools, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Total students participating in HSPART programming/total students enrolled in an HSPART school	514/991 (52%)	258/1,299 (20%)	279/1,061 (26%)	523/872 (60%)
Hours in programming <i>M (SD); range</i>	37 (61); 0–529	57 (87); 0–600	109 (136); 0–1,304	111 (128); 0–1,245
Grade level <i>M (SD); range</i>				
8th Grade	–	8 (NA); 8 – 8	–	15 (9); 2–21
9th Grade	40 (91); 0–529	77 (62); 0–196	81 (194); 1–1,084	14 (14); 0–60
10th Grade	10 (15); 0–108	65 (109); 0–498	92 (119); 0–748	107 (155); 0–642
11th Grade	48 (67); 0–357	53 (68); 0–600	146 (140); 0–1,304	114 (105); 1–612
12th Grade	23 (25); 0–107	15 (15); 0–46	17 (25); 0–114	143 (182); 0–1,245
Gender identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
Female	37 (60); 0–529	63 (97); 0–498	109; (157) 0–1,301	111 (133); 0–1,245
Male	38 (63); 0–357	52 (78); 0–600	108 (120); 0–626	111 (124); 1–642
Racial/ethnic identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
African American	25 (53); 0–529	42 (83); 0–426	95 (210); 0–1,304	117 (141); 1–626

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
American Indian or Alaskan Native	30 (1); 29–31	5 (4); 0–10	4 (5); 0–8	41 (3); 39–44
Asian	34 (53); 0–357	65 (103); 0–498	121 (106); 0–472	100 (111); 2–1,245
Declined to state	34 (44); 0–179	50 (50); 0–162	61 (82); 0–305	98 (89); 1–340
Latinx	43 (65); 0–360	56 (73); 0–383	110 (124); 0–748	118 (130); 0–612
Pacific Islander	22 (18); 0–52	21 (40); 0–180	23 (44); 0–155	94 (91); 3–321
Two or more races	25 (50); 0–216	85 (116); 0–420	120 (158); 0–626	128 (121); 24–428
White	47 (62); 0–179	86 (147); 0–600	136 (156); 8–537	76 (95); 1–425

Note. SY = school year; HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; *M* = median; *SD* = standard deviation.

Exhibit B–2. Student Participation Hours by SY of Enrollment for Philip and Sala Burton High School, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Total students participating in HSPART programming/total students enrolled in an HSPART school	266/427 (62%)	103/638 (16%)	60/524 (12%)	275/440 (63%)
Hours in programming <i>M (SD); range</i>	24 (45) 0–529	55 (101) 0–498	48 (66) 0–378	97 (108) 2–1,245
Grade level <i>M (SD); range</i>				
8th Grade	–	–	–	–
9th Grade	49 (100); 2–529	46 (77); 0–196	13 (8); 3–32	32 (16); 16–60
10th Grade	6 (12); 0–108	56 (102); 0–498	75 (94); 0–378	63 (72); 2–264
11th Grade	29 (8); 0–64	–	58 (47); 2–225	87 (56); 22–459
12th Grade	18 (16); 6–29	–	6 (10); 0–46	208 (257); 2–1,245
Gender identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
Female	30 (59); 0–529	65 (118); 1–498	50 (56); 0–225	109 (138); 7–1,245
Male	17 (14); 0–64	47 (86); 0–400	45 (78); 0–378	88 (78); 2–622

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Racial/ethnic identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
African American	42 (95); 1–529	34 (39); 0–140	27 (39); 1–116	132 (138); 22–622
American Indian or Alaskan Native	30 (1); 29–31	–	–	44 (NA); 44–44
Asian	20 (20); 1–246	77 (129); 3–498	91 (48); 2–378	96 (105); 2–1,245
Declined to state	18 (13); 4–33	12 (9); 5–26	37 (53); 3–98	92 (27); 65–131
Latinx	25 (40); 0–360	41 (79); 0.83–328	32 (58); 0–300	86 (74); 2–572
Pacific Islander	17 (14); 1–32	14 (9); 0–23	1 (1); 1–2	104 (59); 22–196
Two or more races	31 (64); 0–216	77 (88); 7–276	63 (89); 12–196	94 (34); 44–152
White	24 (13); 4–32	6 (NA); 6–6	–	87 (31); 65–131

Note. SY = school year; HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; M = median; SD = standard deviation.

Exhibit B–3. Student Participation Hours by SY of Enrollment for Downtown High School, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Total students participating in HSPART programming/total students enrolled in an HSPART school	90/205 (44%)	53/182 (29%)	66/150 (44%)	42/103 (41%)
Hours in programming <i>M (SD); range</i>	19 (37); 0–347	15 (29); 0–141	22 (36); 0–166	42 (45); 0–145
Grade level <i>M (SD); range</i>				
8th Grade	–	–	–	–
9th Grade	40 (85); 0–347	28 (48); 0–130	36 (43); 5–86	13 (22); 0–39
10th Grade	15 (20); 0–108	20 (33); 0–141	36 (47); 0–155	50 (40); 2–119
11th Grade	16 (19); 0–61	8 (16); 0–102	30 (40); 1–166	51 (50); 1–140
12th Grade	13 (19); 0–51	5 (9); 0–31	9 (20); 0–111	37 (46); 1–145

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Gender identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
Female	21 (43); 0–334	16 (30); 0–140	22 (35); 0–125	41 (41); 0–140
Male	17 (32); 0–347	15 (29); 0–141	22 (37); 0–166	43 (49); 1–145
Racial/ethnic identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
African American	18 (38); 0–334	14 (28); 0–140	22 (34); 0–119	59 (51); 1–145
American Indian or Alaskan Native	–	4 (4); 0–10	4 (5); 0–8	39 (NA); 39–39
Asian	28 (21); 0–41	7 (9); 0–20	32 (44); 0–84	70 (44); 39–101
Declined to state	1 (1); 0–3	10 (14); 0–20	23 (44); 0–140	46 (68); 1–124
Latinx	18 (35); 0–347	19 (33); 0–141	22 (36); 0–166	36 (41); 0–131
Pacific Islander	24 (20); 0–50	4 (6); 0–17	27 (46); 0–155	18 (22); 3–43
Two or more races	32 (60); 0–216	15 (34); 0–111	20 (25); 0–59	–
White	–	11 (7); 0–19	10 (NA); 10–10	41 (68); 1–119

Note. SY = school year; HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; M = median; SD = standard deviation.

Exhibit B–4. Student Participation Hours by SY of Enrollment for John O’Connell High School, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Total students participating in HSPART programming/total students enrolled in an HSPART school	89/228 (39%)	52/283 (18%)	81/253 (32%)	138/209 (66%)
Hours in programming <i>M (SD); range</i>	33 (20); 0–107	76 (96); 0–426	141 (147); 0–1,084	163 (160); 0–642
Grade level <i>M (SD); range</i>				
8th Grade	–	–	–	–
9th Grade	24 (NA); 24–24	–	192 (314); 1–1,084	–
10th Grade	27 (19); 6–44	182 (139); 0–426	144 (181); 1–748	218 (201); 0–642

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
11th Grade	34 (17); 0–106	52 (61); 0–364	157 (124); 1–626	162 (157); 3–612
12th Grade	32 (27); 0–106	27 (14); 0–46	40 (26); 0–114	137 (139); 5–626
Gender identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
Female	32 (22); 0–107	100 (116); 0–426	134 (174); 0–1,084	150 (152); 0–626
Male	34 (18); 0–64	55 (71); 0–364	145 (133); 0–626	171 (165); 3–642
Racial/ethnic identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
African American	32 (24); 0–106	86 (118); 0–426	148 (213); 1–1,084	126 (170); 5–626
American Indian or Alaskan Native	–	–	–	–
Asian	36 (20); 0–64	43 (27); 0–97	207 (128); 56–468	161 (166); 27–642
Declined to state	38 (18); 2–64	36 (NA); 36–36	133 (114); 29–305	120 (111); 16–340
Filipino	36 (16); 0–53	45 (27); 0–95	118 (101); 1–378	119 (134); 10–349
Latinx	33 (19); 0–107	74 (92); 0–383	137 (135); 0–748	176 (164); 0–612
Pacific Islander	52 (NA); 52–52	67 (75); 25–180	–	121 (173); 16–321
Two or more races	35 (24); 18–52	217 (152); 21–420	147 (172); 2–626	166 (170); 24–428
White	24 (22); 0–52	5 (NA); 5–5	125 (156); 11–537	113 (128); 9–425

Exhibit B–5. Student Participation Hours by SY of Enrollment for San Francisco International High School, Fall 2018 through Spring 2022

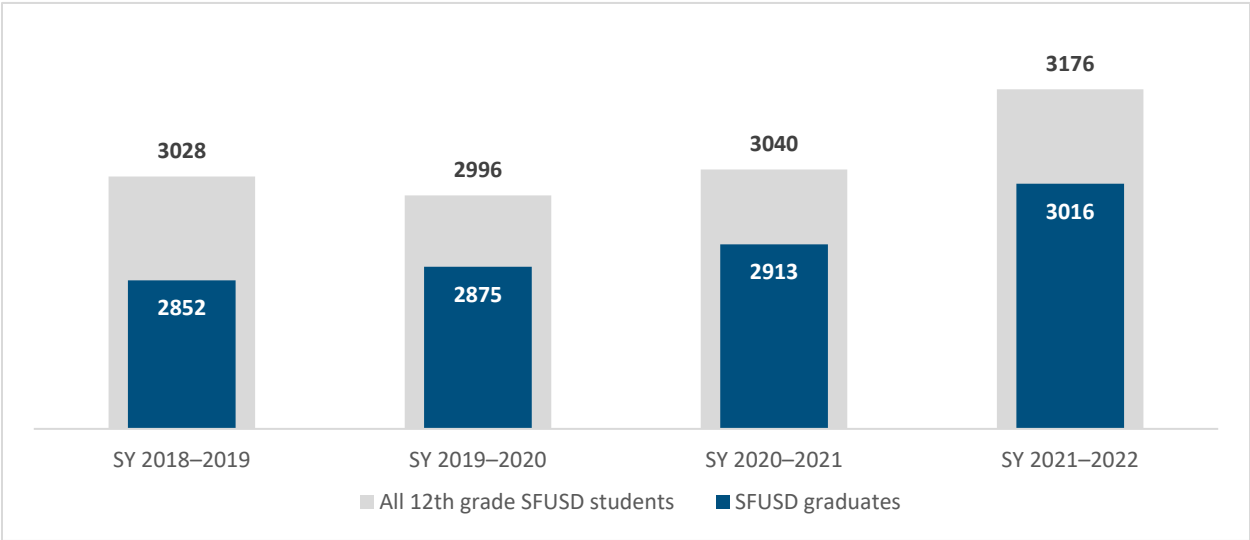
	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
Total students participating in HSPART programming/total students enrolled in an HSPART school	81/185 (44%)	62/260 (24%)	88/195 (45%)	84/168 (50%)
Hours in programming <i>M (SD); range</i>	100 (107); 2–357	78 (81); 2–600	151 (148); 2–1,304	66 (60) 2–246
Grade level <i>M (SD); range</i>				
8th Grade	–	8 (NA); 8–8	–	15 (9); 2–21

	Enrolled SY 2018–2019	Enrolled SY 2019–2020	Enrolled SY 2020–2021	Enrolled SY 2021–2022
9th Grade	–	100 (46); 18–160	36 (20); 3–58	9 (8); 2–36
10th Grade	–	123 (128); 30–419	92 (61); 6–238	16 (13); 2–50
11th Grade	100 (107); 2–357	73 (80); 2–600	175 (161); 2–1,304	110 (46); 23–246
12th Grade	2 (NA); 2–2	12 (14); 2–22	–	–
Gender identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
Female	97 (104); 2–357	72 (67); 2–419	171 (186); 2–1,304	66 (61); 2–183
Male	101 (110); 2–357	82 (90); 2–600	137 (111); 3–474	66 (60); 2–246
Racial/ethnic identity <i>M (SD); range</i>				
African American	97 (115); 16–179	–	586 (648); 42–1,304	–
American Indian or Alaskan Native	–	–	–	–
Asian	110 (117); 3–357	72 (73); 3–419	142 (120); 3–472	72 (63); 3–246
Declined to state	66 (85); 2 – 179	78 (52); 24- 162	81 (20); 60 – 99	–
Latinx	98 (104); 2–357	68 (52); 2–232	146 (119); 2–731	68 (61); 2–213
Pacific Islander	–	–	–	–
Two or more races	–	–	–	–
White	76 (85); 3–179	140 (174); 2–600	160 (163); 8–474	39 (43); 2–132

Note. SY = school year; HSPART = High School Partnerships strategy; M = median; SD = standard deviation.

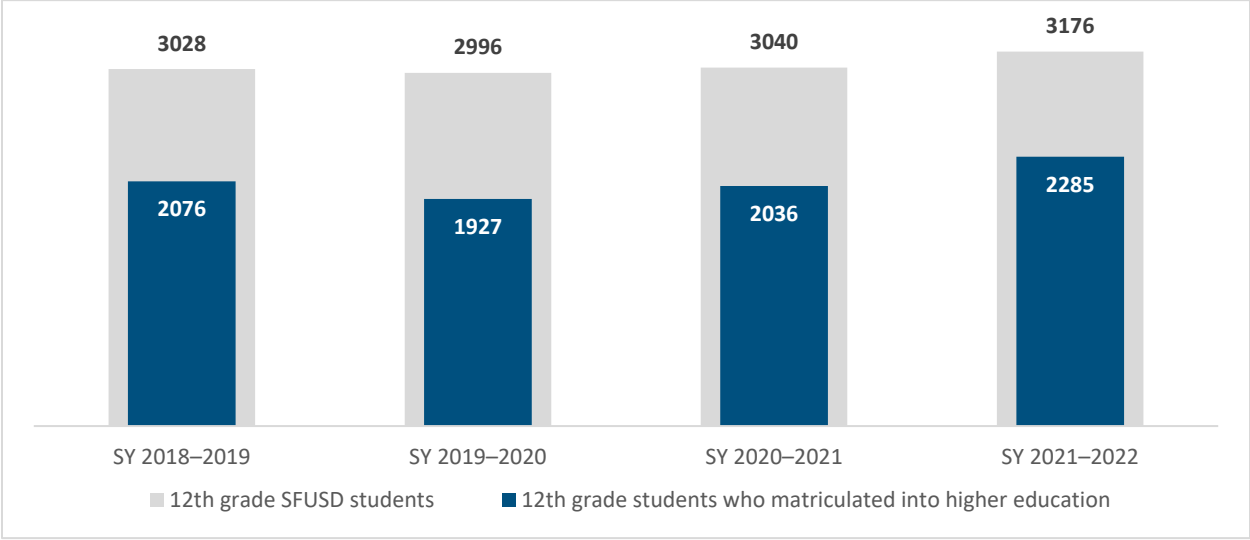
Appendix C. Graduation and Higher Education Matriculation for SFUSD overall

Exhibit C–1. Twelfth Grade Graduates Out of All 12th Grade Students at Non-HSPART Participating Schools



Note. HSPART = High School Partnership strategy; SFUSD = San Francisco United School District; SY = school year. Across all SYs (2018–2022), 11,656 twelfth grade students graduated out of 12,240 (95.2%). In SY 2018–2019, 2,852 twelfth grade students graduated out of 3,028 (94.2%). In SY 2019–2020, 2,875 twelfth grade students graduated out of 2,996 (96% graduation rate). In SY 2020–2021, 2,913 twelfth grade students graduated out of 3,040 (96 graduation rate). In SY 2021–2022, 3,016 twelfth grade students graduated out of 3,176 (95%).

Exhibit C–2. Twelfth Grade Students Matriculating into Higher Education Out of All 12th Grade Students at Non-HSPART Participating Schools



Note. HSPART = High School Partnership strategy; SFUSD = San Francisco United School District; SY = school year. Across all SYs (2018–2022), 8,324 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 12,240 (68%). In SY 2018–2019, 2,076 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 3,028 (68.6%). In SY 2019–2020, 1,927 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 2,996 (64.3%). In SY 2020–2021, 2,036 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 3,040 (67%). In SY 2021–2022, 2,285 twelfth grade students matriculated out of 3,176 (71.9%). Rates represent matriculation into higher education in the fall following high school graduation.

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