

# An Evaluation of Dent Education's Bet on Baltimore Summer Program – Year 4

Mary Laurenzano, MLA  
Joseph M. Reilly, EdD  
Steven M. Ross, PhD

January 2022



**JOHNS HOPKINS**  
SCHOOL *of* EDUCATION

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**Center for Research and  
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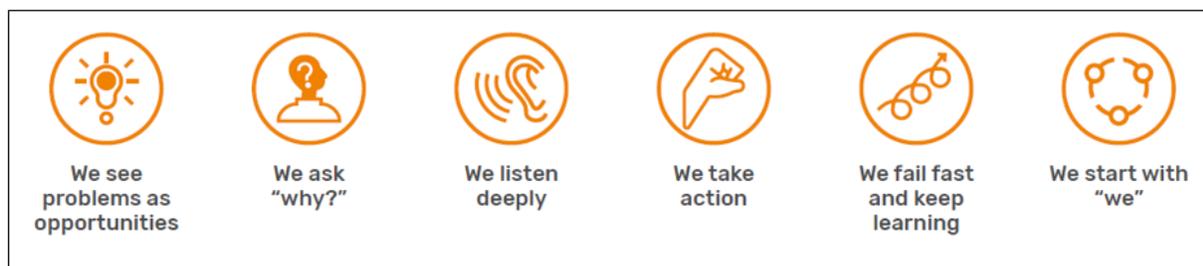
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bet on Baltimore is an intensive summer youth development program with a focus on creativity, hands-on experience, community impact, and entrepreneurship created by Dent Education in 2017 and designed for Baltimore City public high school students. The goals are to engage high school students in Baltimore in meaningful work, leadership, and personal development activities and, according to the program's developers, to "catalyze student potential and prepare them to create impact and value in a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy." Dent Education's mission is to "promote equity by empowering under-resourced youth to discover and develop their innate creative potential to shape the world around them." Through its curriculum, Dent Education seeks to introduce students to the creative problem-solving process of design thinking, maker skills, and the experiences of entrepreneurship and networking. Students identify community issues and business challenges, meet with community and business leaders, learn new skills, and work to create their own social or business enterprise. During the summer of 2021, 10 groups of students ( $n = 93$ ) participated in Bet on Baltimore through a six-week paid summer job opportunity funded by YouthWorks. Students were placed in "tracks," which focused on the following areas: graphic design, music production, physical fabrication using tools like 3D printers, social innovation, business start-ups, internships at value-aligned organizations, and a youth co-owned social enterprise, Made@Dent ([madeatdent.com](http://madeatdent.com)). The six-week session culminated in a virtual showcase, where students presented their ideas and shared lessons learned for an online audience of more than 250 people. During the summer of 2021, 15 coaches led students through the program with the support of three site supporters, one Fellow, and one Mental Health and Wellness Supporter.

A primary focus of the summer program is developing students' mindsets and leadership skills through coach instruction and hands-on experience. Students learn from their own experiences, as well as receive inspiration from entrepreneurs, local leaders, business owners, and mentors who share their own stories. The program's intention is to develop students' sense of curiosity, self-efficacy, and growth mindset, while also improving collaboration, communication, and self-awareness skills. In addition to curbing summer learning loss, Dent Education's goal is to alter students' self-perceptions, as well as their perceptions of the world around them. The program teaches students to see problems as opportunities, accept failure as a part of learning, and develop confidence in their ability to make an impact in the world. Students reflect and journal every morning about their personal growth and then work in teams to bring their ideas to life. These concepts, delivered through the Dent Mindsets, are illustrated in Figure 1.



*Figure 1. Dent Mindsets*

The purpose of the Year 4 evaluation was the continuation of examining program implementation processes and outcomes focused on student participation, perceptions of their experiences, and attitudes and aspirations regarding future education and career interests. The study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the summer program activities for each of the 10 cohorts?
2. What are students' experiences in and perceptions of the program regarding engagement, activities, benefits, and challenges?
3. To what degree are changes in students' self-efficacy, attitudes toward school, and education and career aspirations reflected over the duration of the program?
4. What are students' self-perceptions of how their behavior might have changed during the program?
5. What are coaches' experiences in and perceptions of the program regarding personal roles and activities, student outcomes, benefits, and challenges?
6. What are parents' perceptions of their child's experience in the program?

## *Results*

As in previous years, the program appears to be highly successful based on the perceptions of all stakeholders, which were very positive. Student survey results were largely consistent with those obtained in the previous three years, revealing that participants were extremely satisfied with their program experience. At the conclusion of the program, the overwhelming majority of students reported that they possess many of the attitudes that Dent Education attempts to instill and regularly exhibit many of the behaviors reinforced through the program. These included attitudes related to self-efficacy and growth mindset and behaviors related to curiosity, collaboration, communication, self-awareness, and self-management. Furthermore, from the pre-survey to the post-survey, students made statistically significant growth on roughly half of the items assessed—a total of 14 areas. The majority of these areas fell within the domains of collaboration and self-management. By the end of the program, students were significantly more likely than they were at the beginning to report that they view problems as opportunities to make a difference, believe in their ability to shape the world around them, and believe that working with others can help them reach goals in creative,

new ways. In terms of behavioral changes, students were more likely at the close of the program than they were at the beginning to indicate that they pay attention, even when there are distractions, are focused when they work independently, consistently remember and follow directions, and are consistently respectful of other people's views when they disagree.

Findings from the follow-up student survey, as well as those from the parent survey, suggest that these trends largely endured once students left the program. On the follow-up survey, over 85% of students indicated that they feel the program has had a positive impact on their beliefs about their ability to shape the world around them, and about two-thirds indicated that they continue to apply the Dent mindsets, as well as skills they learned over the summer. Over 80% of parents indicated that since completing the program, they have observed improvements in their child's sense of agency and control over their learning, as well as their overall maturity and sense of responsibility. Parents and students both indicated that they feel the program will have a lasting impact on students' motivation to attend college and pursue specific career paths.

Lastly, coaches reiterated these findings and highlighted that the program strengths include providing access to opportunities and practical experiences not typically found in a summer youth jobs program. Real-life applications through the experience of working in a professional setting, hands-on activities, group work, and final presentations were all deemed valuable components of the program. Coaches further noted more intangible program strengths, such as providing students with a safe space where they are valued. Coaches believe that, for the majority of students, the program delivered an impactful and empowering experience. Coaches were highly positive of their experience with the program, viewing it as an opportunity for their own growth and personal interest in working with youth.

### *Recommendations*

Key recommendations from the overall data collection reiterate major suggestions made last year:

- Continue to refine the curriculum so that implementation is more realistic in a six-week window.
- Clearly define coach responsibilities at the outset to provide clarity of expectations.
- Extend the training period and provide more content specific training.
- Provide a curriculum guide with clear explanations of available resources.
- Continue to enlist a diverse selection of speakers during Food for Thought to be representative of the students participating in the program but also relevant to their track.
- Improve coaching professional development and support, as well as overall program formatting to further increase future benefits.
- Streamline meetings to ensure efficient use of participants' time.

- Improve communication between Dent and coaches and between coaches and students.
- Reduce using multiple channels with Slack in addition to other communication platforms, like email, used to disseminate information.

Implementing these further refinements could help the program's continuous improvement efforts, as well as its overall effectiveness and sustainability.

## An Evaluation of Dent Education's Bet on Baltimore Summer Program – Year 4

Bet on Baltimore is an intensive summer youth development program with a focus on creativity, hands-on experience, and entrepreneurship created by Dent Education in 2017 and designed for Baltimore City public high school students. The goals are to engage high school students in Baltimore in meaningful work, leadership, and personal development activities and, according to the program's developers, to "catalyze student potential and prepare them to create impact and value in a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy." Dent Education's mission is to "promote equity by empowering under-resourced youth to discover and develop their innate creative potential to shape the world around them." Through its curriculum, Dent Education seeks to introduce students to the creative problem-solving process of design thinking, maker skills, and the experiences of entrepreneurship and networking. Students identify community issues and business challenges, meet with community and business leaders, learn new skills, and work to create their own social or business enterprise. During the summer of 2021, 10 distinct tracks of students ( $n = 93$ ) participated in Bet on Baltimore through a six-week paid summer job opportunity funded by YouthWorks.

The students selected to participate in the 2021 program were assigned to the following sites: Social Enterprise Accelerator, Start-up Garage, Dented Sound Productions, Design Studio, Social Innovation, Denterntship, and Made@Dent. In addition, Dent Education partnered with No Boundaries Coalition, a resident-led advocacy organization located in Central West Baltimore. This non-profit group participated in Dent-wide events and coach onboarding while running their own site using their own curriculum. Students were assigned tracks based on their rating of program offerings during their initial interview. The six-week session culminated in a closing Showcase, where students presented their ideas, shared real prototypes and lessons learned. During the summer, 15 coaches led students through the curriculum with the support of three site supporters, one Fellow, and one Mental Health and Wellness Supporter. Site supporters were former Bet on Baltimore coaches assigned to specific sites where they had relevant experience in order to provide ongoing coaching support and professional development. The Fellow was a college or high school intern who provided administrative support to each site, including managing paperwork, tracking attendance, and communicating with families.

A primary focus of the summer program is developing students' mindsets and leadership skills through coach instruction and hands-on experience. Students learn from their own experience, as well as receive inspiration from entrepreneurs, local leaders, business owners, and mentors who share their own stories. The program's intention is to develop students' sense of curiosity, self-efficacy, and growth mindset, while also improving collaboration, communication, and self-awareness skills. In addition to curbing summer learning loss, Dent Education's goal is to alter students' self-perceptions, as well as their perceptions of the world around them. The program teaches students to see

problems as opportunities, accept failure as a part of learning, and develop confidence in their ability to make an impact in the world. Students reflect and journal every morning about their personal growth and then work in teams to bring their ideas to life. These concepts, delivered through the Dent Mindsets, are illustrated in Figure 1.



*Figure 1. Dent Mindsets*

Following the pilot year of the program in 2017, leadership at Dent Education worked with the Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research and Reform in Education, to conduct an evaluation of the program and examine implementation processes and outcomes with a focus on student participation, perceptions of their experiences, and attitudes and aspirations regarding future education and career interests. Results of Years 1 – 3 evaluations revealed that, based on multiple data sources, participants reported highly positive views of Bet on Baltimore and were overwhelmingly satisfied with their program experience. Student surveys showed their self-reported beliefs and behaviors significantly changed in a variety of important ways over the course of each summer session. Feedback from coaches was also highly positive of their experience, viewing it as both an opportunity for their own growth and personal interest in working with youth. Among the greatest benefits of the program, as reported by both students and coaches each year, has been the exposure to new and different opportunities not typically offered through the Baltimore YouthWorks summer job program.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the Year 4 evaluation was a continuation of examining these program implementation processes and outcomes, with an additional focus on student behavioral attitudes, as well as parent perceptions of their child's engagement in the program. The study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the summer program activities for each of the 10 cohorts?
2. What are students' experiences in and perceptions of the program regarding engagement, activities, benefits, and challenges?

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<sup>1</sup> YouthWorks is a summer jobs initiative run through the Baltimore City Office of Employment Development. The initiative provides paid five-week job experiences for Baltimore area teenagers with non-profit, government, and private-sector employers. During the summer, students are paid \$11.75 per hour (the state's minimum wage) while completing the job experience. More information is available at <https://youthworks.oedworks.com/>

3. To what degree are changes in students' self-efficacy, attitudes toward school, and education and career aspirations reflected over the duration of the program?
4. What are students' self-perceptions of how their behavior might have changed during the program?
5. What are coaches' experiences in and perceptions of the program regarding personal roles and activities, student outcomes, benefits, and challenges?
6. What are parents' perceptions of their child's experience in the program?

## Method

### *Research Design*

The current study employed a mixed-methods design, including qualitative and quantitative data collected from students, coaches, and parents with a primary focus on capturing how students' experiences in the summer program affected their self-efficacy, development as leaders, and aspirations regarding education and careers. A second focus was to obtain formative evaluation findings to guide Dent Education in refining future offerings of the program. Due to circumstances concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, Dent Education delivered the program virtually for a second consecutive year. To examine these outcomes, the Johns Hopkins Center for Research and Reform in Education (CRRE) developed or co-developed with Dent Education the student and parent surveys and the coach focus group instruments.

### *Participants*

The primary study participants included 93 students in grades 8-12, representing 19 high schools from Baltimore City. Students were selected for participation in one of the 10 tracks by Dent Education staff in cooperation with their parents, high schools, and other youth organizations. Student selection consideration included a 15-20 minute in-person interview with high school students who expressed interest in the program. To participate in the program and be paid, students must have applied through YouthWorks' application process. Additional participant groups were the 15 coaches responsible for program delivery and mentoring along with parents of participating students.

### *Measures*

Data sources for the current study included:

**Student survey.** A pre- and post-survey, co-developed by CRRE and Dent Education, was administered to student participants and is found in Appendix A of this report. This survey was developed during the Year 1 evaluation and refined in Year 2; several additional questions regarding personal behavior were added in 2020, Year 3.<sup>2</sup> Closed-ended items asked students to rate their beliefs and abilities across six domains using a 5-point Likert scale.

These domains included curiosity, self-efficacy, growth mindset, collaboration, communication, and self-awareness. Open-ended items also collected information about

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<sup>2</sup> Items added to measure student behavior were pulled and adapted as needed from the CORE Districts Social Emotional Learning Survey. For more information on this publicly available survey, please visit <http://measuringSEL.org/product/core-districts-sel-survey/>

students' perceptions of their Bet on Baltimore experience, likes, dislikes, and recommendations for improvement. Behavioral questions focused on self-efficacy and self-perceptions of participants. The pre-survey was administered online to students during the first week of implementation and the post-survey on the final week of the session. Descriptive statistics and frequencies for the student survey are presented in Appendix D of this report.

**Coach focus groups.** Virtual focus groups were conducted with nine coaches representing each of the sites to examine their experiences and perceptions while participating in the program. Questions directly addressed their perceptions of student engagement with the program activities, impacts of the program on students' interests in education and careers, and impacts on students' leadership. The focus group instrument is shown in Appendix C of this report.

**Parent survey.** A parent survey was added to the Year 4 data collection activities to capture parents' perceptions of their child's experiences participating in the summer program. Closed-ended items asked parents to rate the frequency of behaviors exhibited by their child on a 5-point Likert scale. A separate bank of questions focused on motivational behaviors related to school, college, and career. The parent survey instrument is shown in the Appendix F of this report.

**Four-month follow-up student survey.** Co-developed by CRRE and Dent Education, the four-month follow-up student survey was designed to obtain student perceptions of any long-term impacts of participation in the summer program. Closed-ended items asked students to rate their agreement regarding engagement and motivation across a 5-point Likert scale. Open-ended items collected information on students' application of the Dent Mindsets since leaving the program and the impact their participation has had on their current behavior. The four-month student survey instrument is shown in Appendix B of this report.

### *Analytical Approach*

Student survey results were analyzed both descriptively and with inferential statistical tests. Paired-samples *t*-tests were used to identify areas in which students' scores significantly changed from the pre- to post-survey. The overall small size of the sample coupled with its relative homogeneity, however, precluded disaggregated analyses that compared survey results based on student demographic characteristics.

## Results

The following section includes findings from all data sources, including student surveys, parent surveys, and coach focus groups. Due to the virtual nature of the program in 2021, on-site observations were not conducted. As appropriate, these findings are synthesized across data points to present main findings and recommendations.

### *Student and Parent Surveys*

All participating students for whom parental consent was obtained were invited to complete both the pre- and post-survey, administered during the first week and on the final week of the session, respectively. Surveys were completed by students online via the Qualtrics survey platform. In total, 39 students completed the post-survey, while 34 students completed both the pre-survey and the post-survey.<sup>3</sup> The parent survey, administered in a similar time window as the post-program student survey, was completed by 44 participants.

For the student surveys, the sample consisted of slightly more female students than male students. About two-thirds of students were African American. While the sample included a mix of student ages, about three-quarters were 16-18 years old. About one-third of students were returners to Dent programming from the previous summer, and a similar proportion indicated on the four-month follow-up survey that they were completing Dent programming during the current 2021-22 school year. A full summary of the demographic characteristics of the participant group is presented in Table 1.

Table 1<sup>4</sup>  
*Student Survey: Demographic Characteristics*

	<i>Summer Post-Survey</i>	<i>Four-Month Follow-Up</i>
Gender <sup>5</sup>		
	Male	36.8
	Female	52.6
Race		

<sup>3</sup> Only students whose parents provided consent to participate in the study completed the questionnaires. The participant sample is limited to this group.

<sup>4</sup> Demographic characteristics presented in Table 1 are for the analytic sample and incorporate only participants who completed the student questionnaire. Based on official enrollment statistics (recorded in Spring, 2021), 93 students enrolled in Bet on Baltimore for summer 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Of participating students, 7.7% identified as non-binary; 2.6% indicated that they would prefer not to provide gender information.

	Asian	2.6	0.0
	Black or African American	61.5	68.4
	Hispanic or Latino	10.3	5.3
	White	10.3	10.5
	Two or more	7.7	15.8
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Age			
	14-15 years old	32.4	15.8
	16-18 years old	67.5	84.3
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Location			
	Social Enterprise Accelerator	12.8	19.2
	Start-Up Garage	7.7	7.7
	Dent Sound Productions	10.3	11.5
	Design Studio	10.3	7.7
	Made @ Dent	10.3	23.1
	Social Innovation: Stories of Impact	20.5	11.5
	Social Innovation	5.1	7.7
	Denternship	20.5	11.5
<hr/>			
Previous Experiences			
	Participated in Bet on Baltimore in 2020	33.3	-
	Are you participating in any Dent Education Programs during this school year?	-	30.8

*Note.* The summer post-program survey was completed by 39 students. Of these, 34 also completed the pre-program survey. The four-month follow-up survey was completed by 26 students.

**Curiosity.** Curiosity items measured the extent to which students ask questions, listen to others, and seek to understand different perspectives. As shown below in Figures 2 and 3, upon the conclusion of the program this year, over 95% of participating students indicated that they frequently<sup>6</sup> listen to others using active listening strategies and carefully listen to other people's points of view. Over 80% indicated that frequently, they think about problems from different points of view, and over 70% indicated that they ask questions to deepen their understanding.

Across these areas, students' responses were generally similar between what they reported before beginning the program (pre-survey) and what they reported after completing the program (post-survey). The one exception was in the area of asking questions to deepen understanding. After completing the program, students were significantly more likely than they were at the start to indicate that they frequently engage in this behavior ( $p < .05$ ).

"In the past 30 days, how often did you do each of the following..."

<sup>6</sup> For purposes of narrative clarity, "frequently" refers to those students who indicated that they "often" or "almost all the time" engaged in this action during the past 30 days.

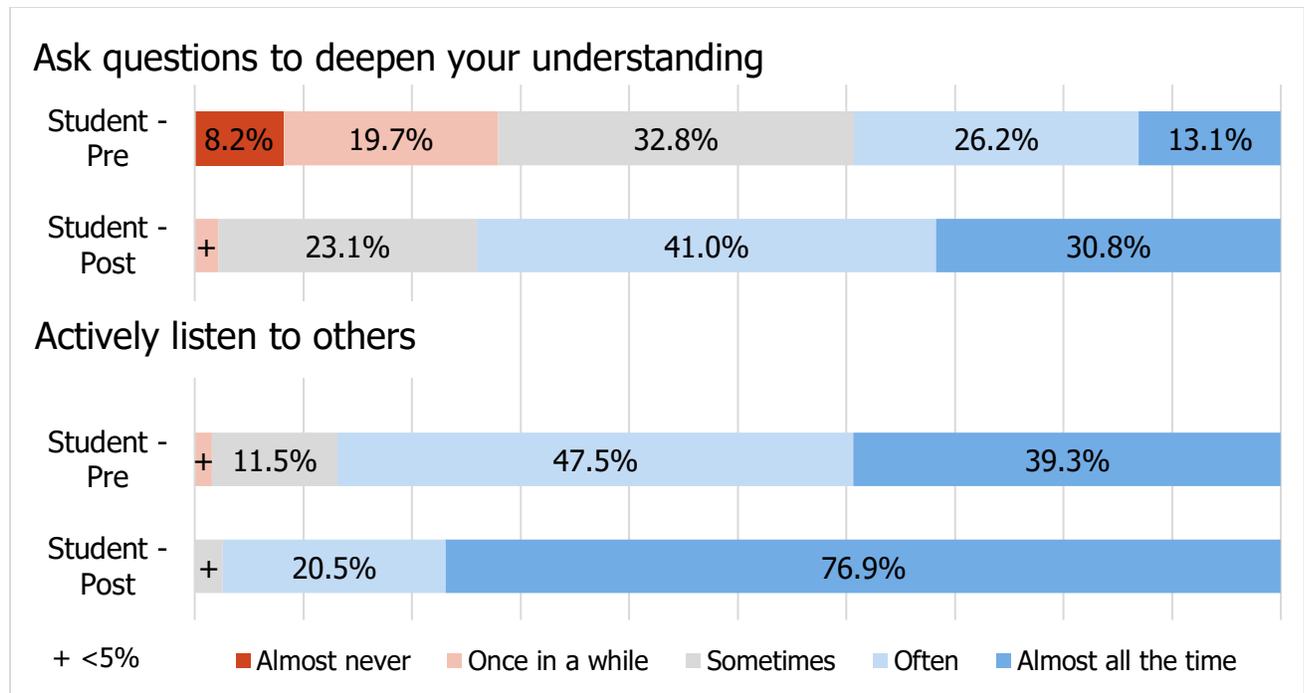


Figure 2. Curiosity survey responses (Part I)

“In the past 30 days, how often did you do each of the following...”

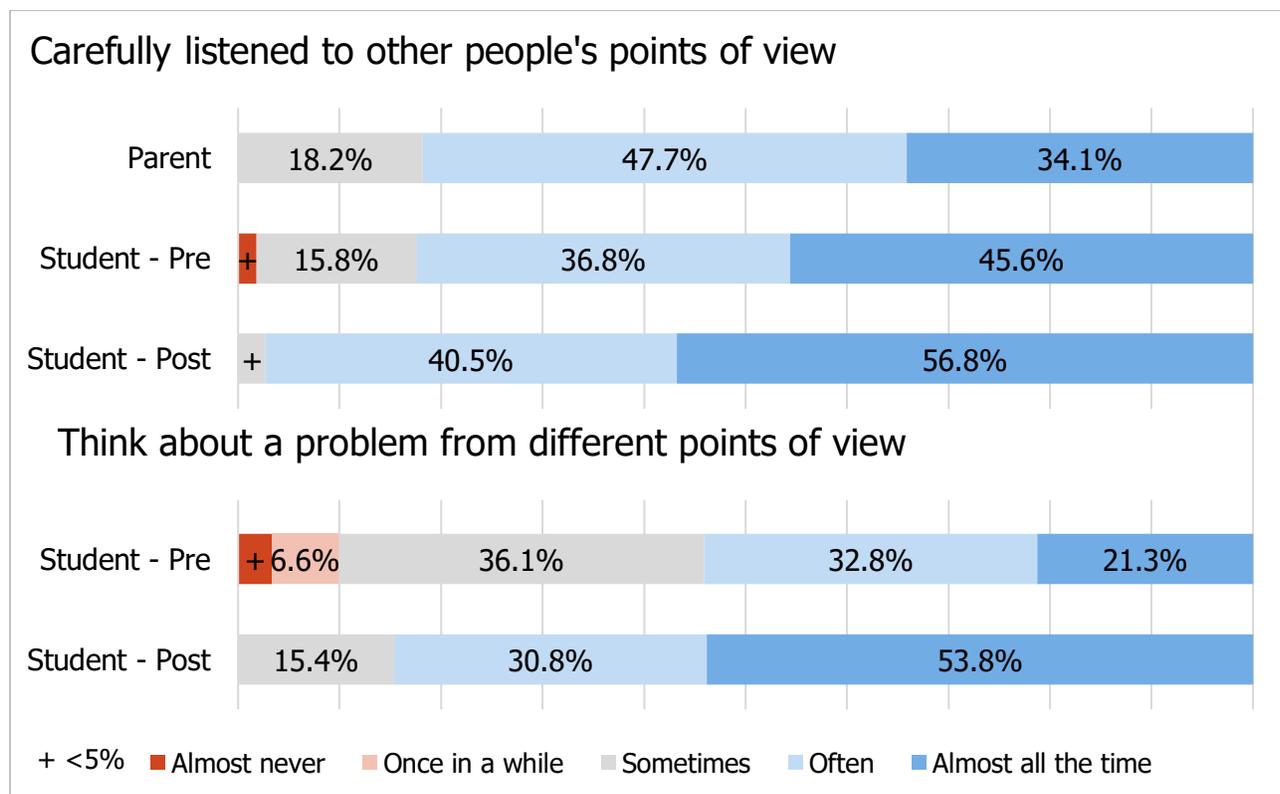
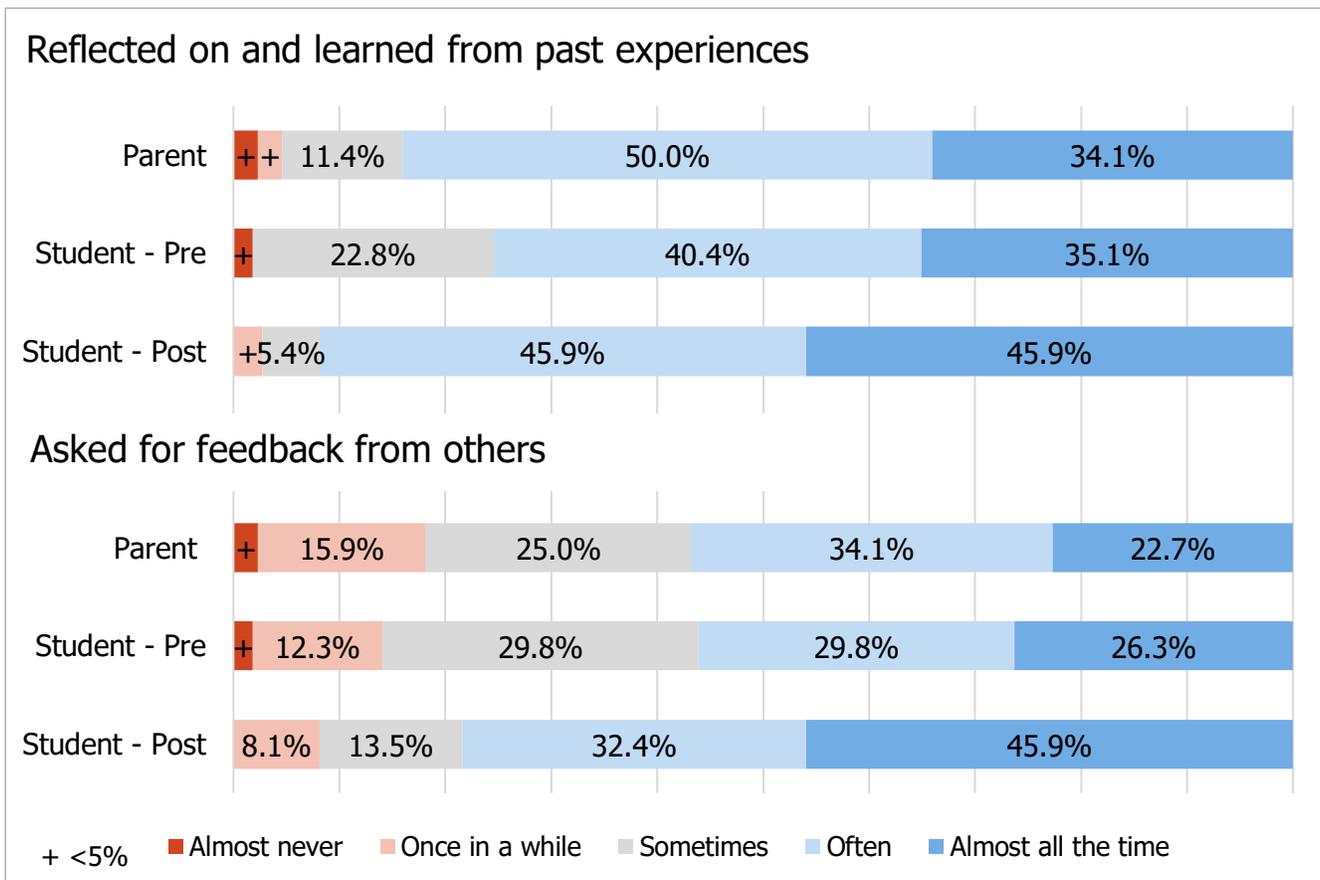


Figure 3. Curiosity survey responses (Part II)

**Self-awareness, efficacy, and mindset.** Survey items also addressed several loosely connected concepts related to student’s social-emotional functioning: self-awareness, self-efficacy, and growth mindset (see Figure 4).

First, self-awareness was examined through items that measured the extent that students engaged in behaviors such as reflecting on past experiences and asking for feedback from others. Parallel items were asked on both the student and parent surveys in these areas. By the end of the program, roughly 90% of students indicated that they frequently reflect on and learn from past experiences. Just under 80% indicated that they regularly ask for feedback from others. Parents’ impressions largely mirrored these responses, though in both cases, were slightly more mixed.

“In the past 30 days, how often did you do each of the following...”



Survey items related to self-efficacy examined students’ beliefs concerning adversity and their ability to impact the world around them, while items related to growth mindset examined students’ beliefs concerning failure and the role that effort plays in achieving goals (see Figures 5 and 6). By the close of the program, over 95% of students indicated that they believe that, with effort, they can get better at anything. Over 85% indicated that they view problems as opportunities to make a difference, believe in their

ability to shape the world around them, and are comfortable risking failure to achieve their goals. For two of these items, viewing problems as opportunities ( $p < .01$ ) and believing in their ability to shape the world around them ( $p < .05$ ) students demonstrated statistically significant growth between the pre- and post-program surveys.

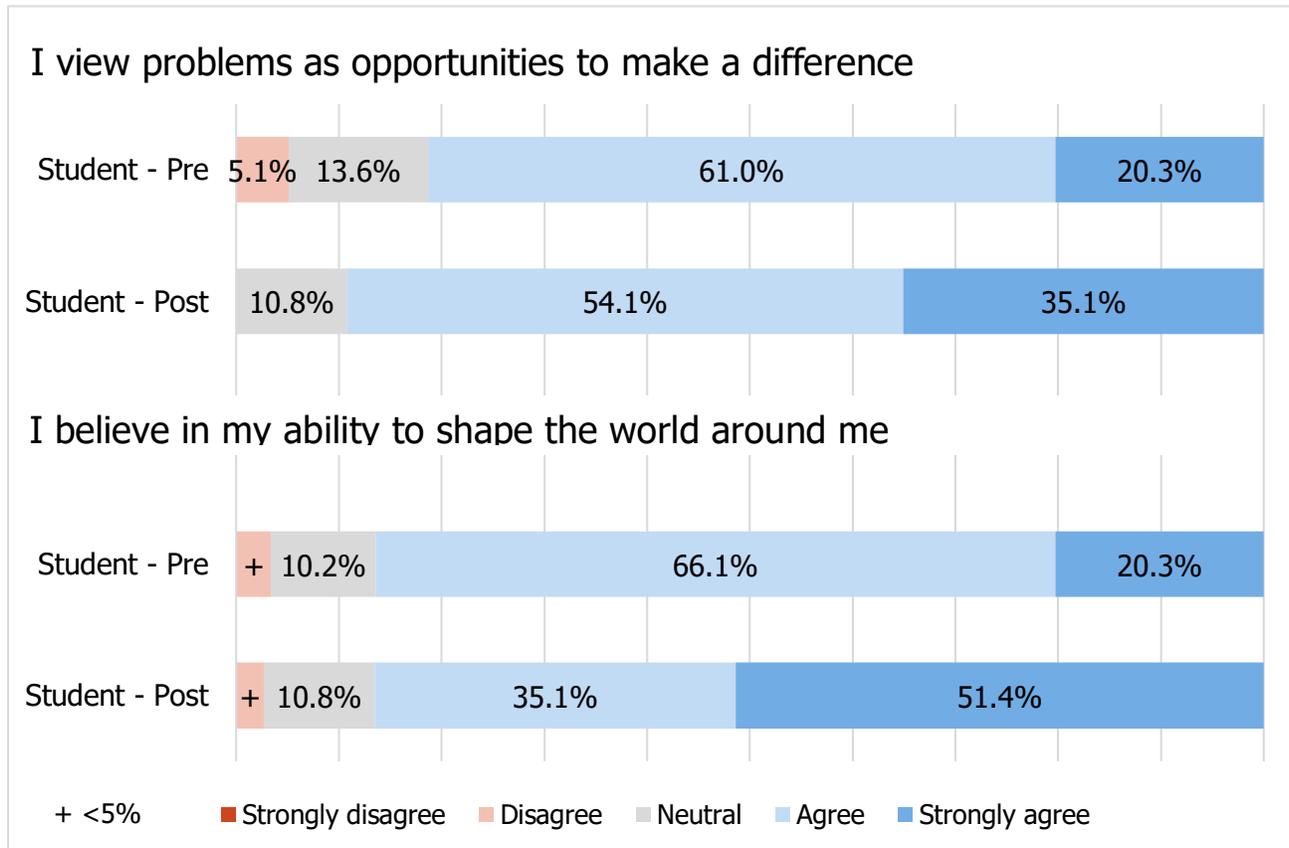


Figure 5. Self-efficacy survey responses

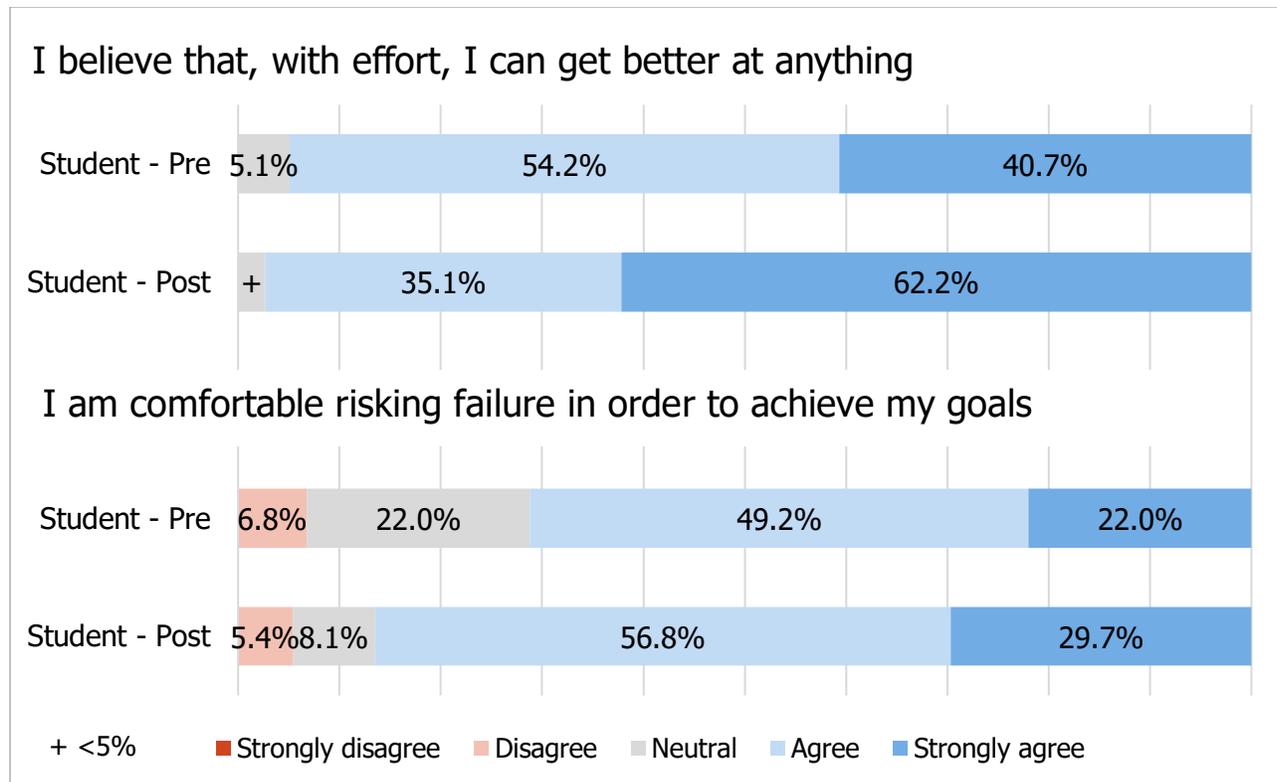


Figure 6. Growth mindset survey responses

Open-ended questions that addressed these areas were also incorporated into the survey. In one question related to self-awareness, students were asked, “How has the program changed you?” Almost half reported becoming more confident overall and specifically related to public speaking skills. Others reported that participation gave them a sense of purpose. One student summed it up this way:

*It has changed me by giving me a purpose a (sic) making me feel like I belong in the world.*

Another student stated:

*The program has taught me that I can do anything I set my mind to.*

Other students spoke of becoming more open-minded to the views of others and how changing their own mindset opened them up to other opportunities. As one student reported:

*The program has opens (sic) up my view about how I can impact the world around me. What I mean about this is that me putting effort and time into something I can create something that not only benefits me but others.*

Finally, students reported becoming better listeners, having more patience, feeling more comfortable with others, and being more focused on the future.

Open-ended questions on the post-survey also addressed the areas of self-efficacy and self-perceptions of students in the program. Responses to these questions further illustrate that participants developed an increased sense of self-confidence and motivation. In response to the question, "Because of this program I am more...," about half of students reported being more confident in themselves while becoming more outgoing and self-assured in their ability to express their beliefs. Other students acknowledged increased inspiration and motivation in helping others and pursuing their own ideas. Students reported becoming more creative, able to engage with others, invested in their community, and able to plan for the future. One student's concise response was, "Empathetic, Confident, Hopeful, Creative, Happy, Social."

In response to the following open-ended item, "Because of this program I now believe...," more than one-third of students expressed their ability to make a difference in their community. Students strongly believe in themselves and their ability to achieve their goals, including starting a business. As one student shared,

*I now believe that anything can be achieved if you spend the time planning to achieve it, and then acting on that plan. Dreams can turn into goals, and goals can turn into steps. If you take the first step, then you're already on the path to greatness.*

As reflected in the Likert-based item that showed significant change, students recognized the importance of feedback, even if it was difficult to hear. Further, they learned that everyone has a story, and all stories are worth listening to.

**Collaboration.** Students' collaboration abilities were measured through Likert items that assessed their beliefs, as well as through items that asked them to report the frequency in which they engage in certain behaviors (see Figure 7). In terms of beliefs, at the close of the program, roughly 90% of students indicated that they believe that working with others can help them reach goals in new ways. About 80% indicated that they can work with someone who has different opinions than them and that they enjoy working with other students their age.

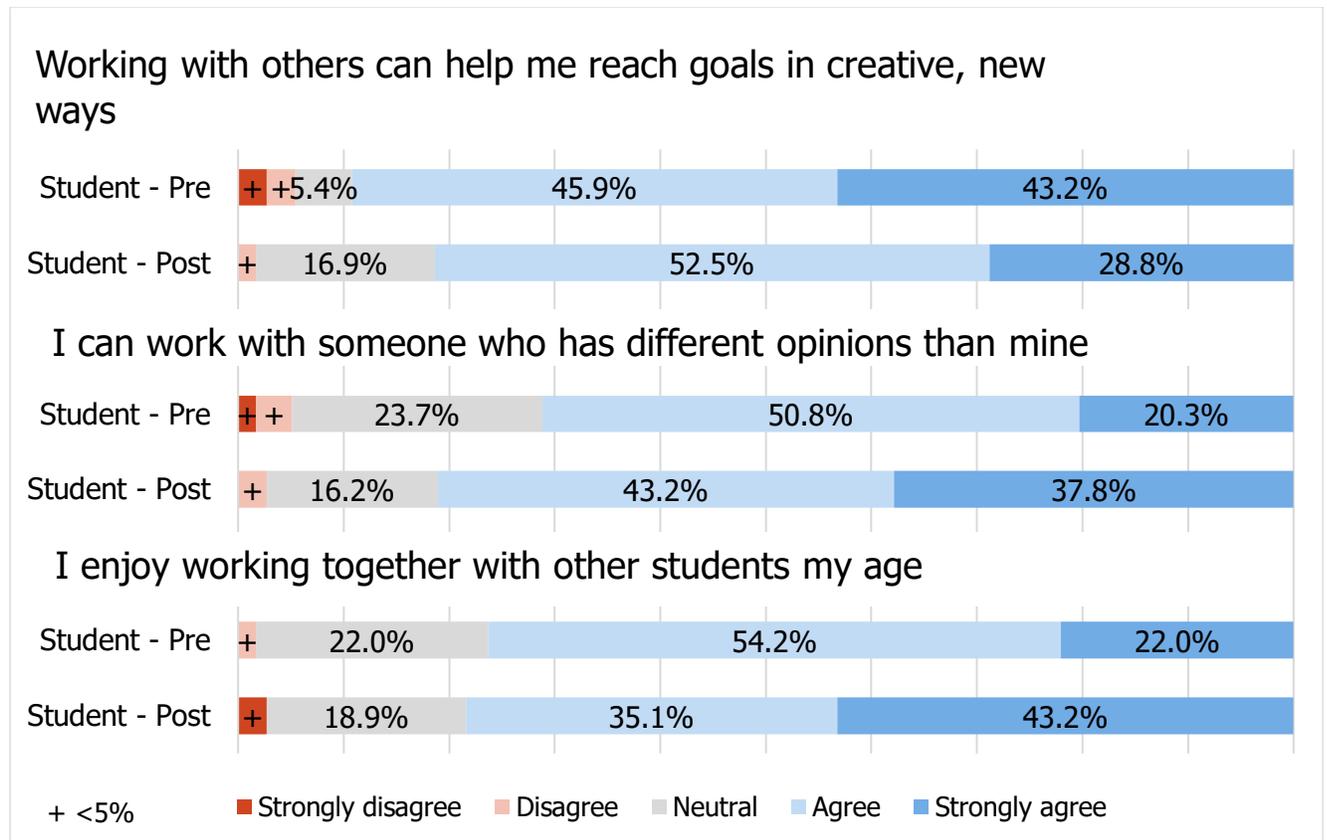


Figure 7. Collaboration survey responses – Student beliefs

In terms of behaviors, students and parents were asked parallel items related to collaboration. By the close of the program, over 95% of students indicated that they frequently demonstrate respect for others, while close to 90% indicated that they frequently engage in teamwork and that they regularly express appreciation for teammates (see Figure 8).<sup>7</sup> Parents’ impressions closely matched these responses.

<sup>7</sup> One survey item that asked: “In the past 30 days, how often have you expressed appreciation for your teammates” was administered on the post-survey only.

“In the past 30 days, how often did you do each of the following...”

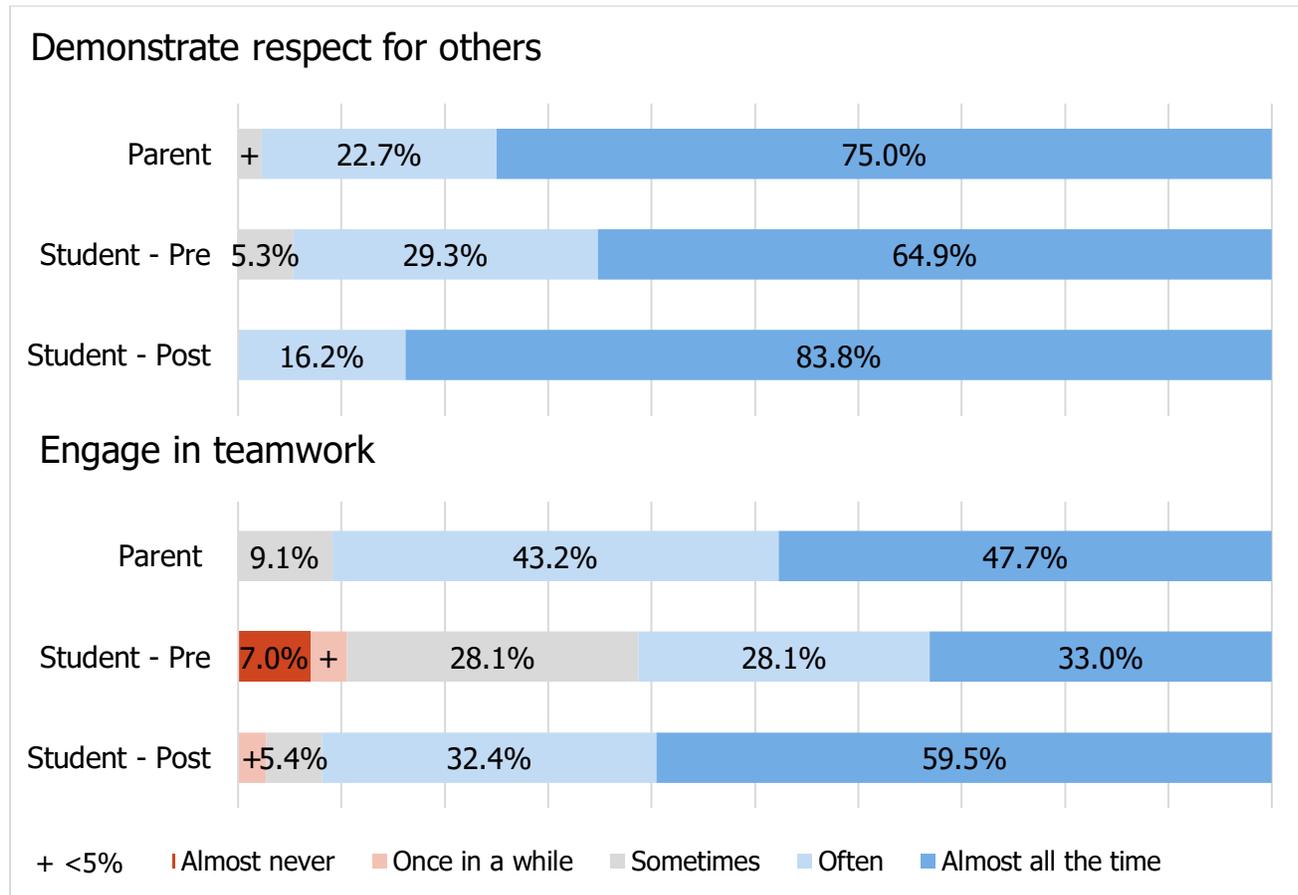


Figure 8. Collaboration survey responses – Student behaviors

Across the collaboration items, students’ responses suggested that significant growth occurred in numerous areas over the duration of the program. After completing the program, students were significantly more likely than they were at the start to indicate that they:

- Demonstrate respect for others ( $p < .05$ )
- Regularly engage in teamwork ( $p < .05$ )
- Believe that working with others can help them reach goals in creative, new ways ( $p < .05$ )
- Can work with someone who has different opinions ( $p < .001$ )
- Enjoy working together with other students their age ( $p < .05$ )

**Communication.** Students’ communication skills were also measured through items that assessed their beliefs and the frequency with which they engage in certain behaviors (see Figures 9 and 10). In terms of beliefs, by the close of the program, about 70% of students indicated that they believe that their ideas persuade other people to take action, and about 60% indicated that they are confident in their public speaking

abilities. In both areas, students demonstrated statistically significant growth from the pre-survey to the post-survey ( $p < .001$ ).

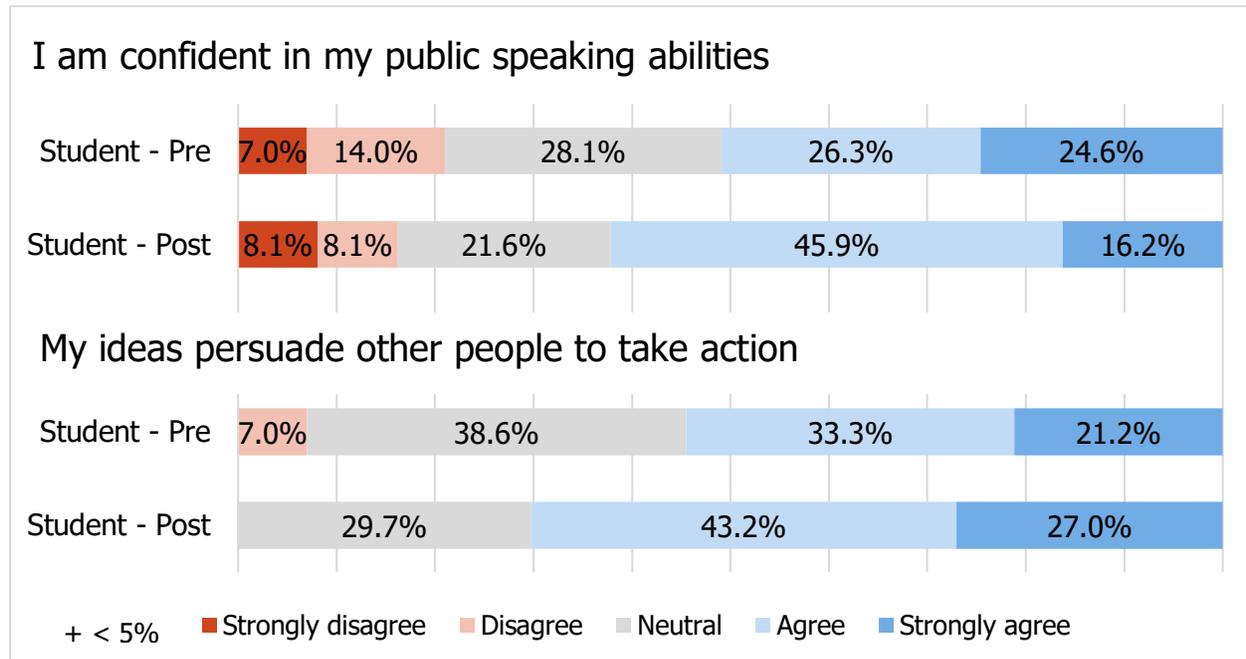


Figure 9. Communication survey responses – Student beliefs

At the close of the program, with regard to behaviors, roughly 90% of students indicated that they adjust their communication style depending on the audience. About 85% indicated they feel that they present their ideas clearly and think about how their actions impact others (see Figure 10). These trends were mostly similar with what students reported at the start of the program. Moreover, for each of these items, parents’ impressions generally mirrored what was reported by students. In most cases, however, parents’ impressions were slightly lower.

“In the past 30 days, how often did you do each of the following...”

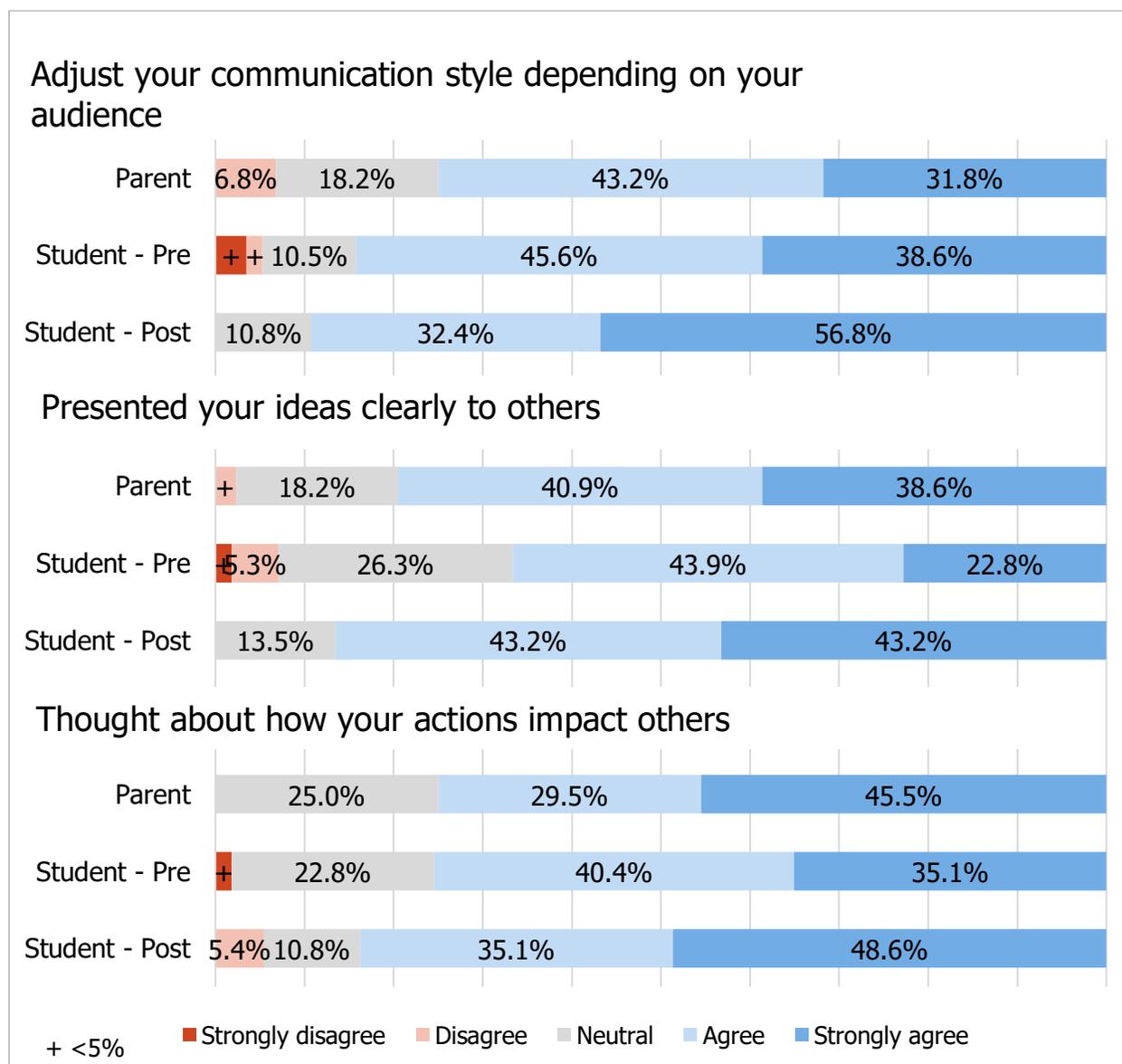


Figure 10. Communication survey responses – Student behaviors

**Self-management.** Self-management items measured the extent that the program may have influenced students’ behaviors with regard to sense of responsibility, time-management, and general academic effort (see Figures 11 and 12). At the close of the program, nearly all students indicated that they usually remember and follow directions and are prepared for each session. About 95% indicated that they are respectful to other’s views when they disagreed with them. Roughly 90% indicated that they are focused when they work independently and that they get their work done right away instead of waiting until the last minute. About 80% indicated that they pay attention even when there are distractions. As shown in Figures 11 and 12, parents’ impressions

of students' behaviors in these areas were generally similar, if slightly lower, across most items.

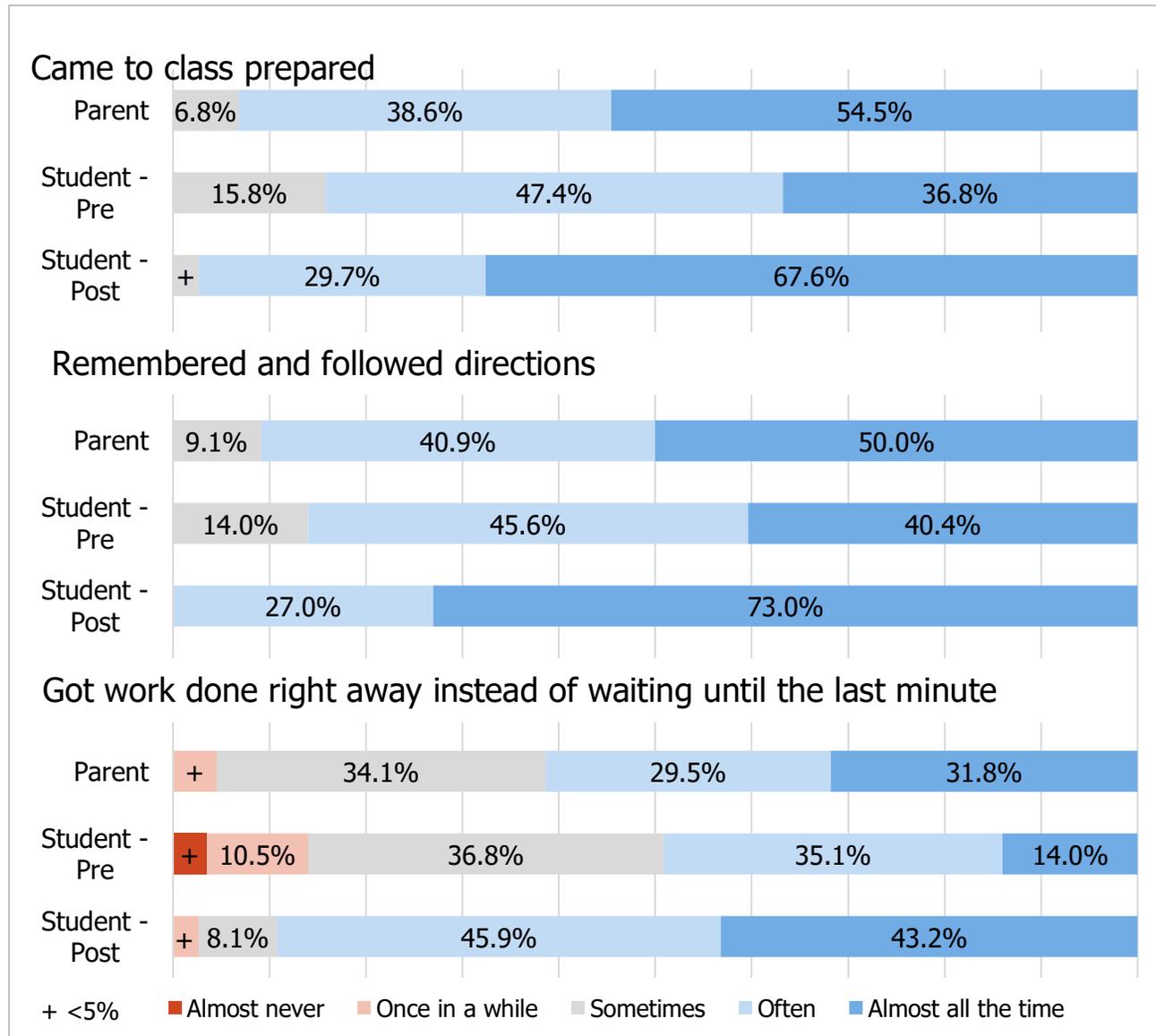


Figure 11. Self-management survey responses (Part I)

“In the past 30 days, how often did you do each of the following...”

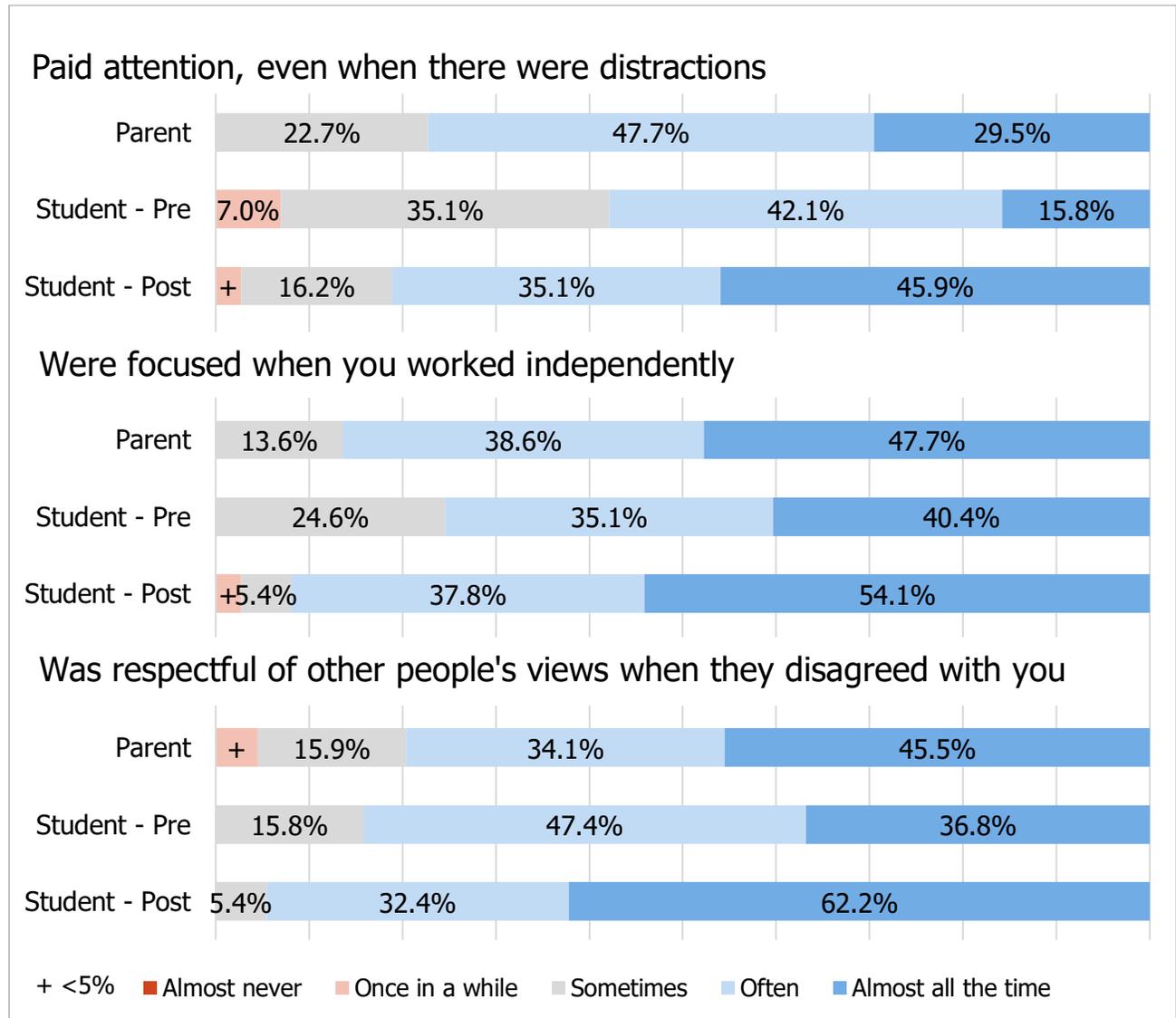


Figure 12. Self-management survey responses (Part II)

Significant pre- to post-program growth was exhibited by students across many of these items. After completing the program, students were significantly more likely than they were at the start to indicate that they frequently:

- Pay attention, even when there are distractions ( $p < .05$ ).
- Are focused when they work independently ( $p < .001$ ).
- Are respectful of other people’s views when they disagree ( $p < .01$ )
- Remember and follow directions ( $p < .05$ )

**Lasting impressions.** On the parent survey and on the student four-month follow-up survey, participants provided impressions of the program’s enduring impact. In

terms of outcomes related to engagement and motivation, parents and students both highlighted that they felt the program had a lasting impact on motivation to attend college and the motivation to pursue a specific career path. While parents indicated that they had observed an improvement in their child’s engagement in school, students expressed more mixed feelings in this area on the four-month follow-up.

“As a result of participating in the Bet on Baltimore Program I am (my child is)...”

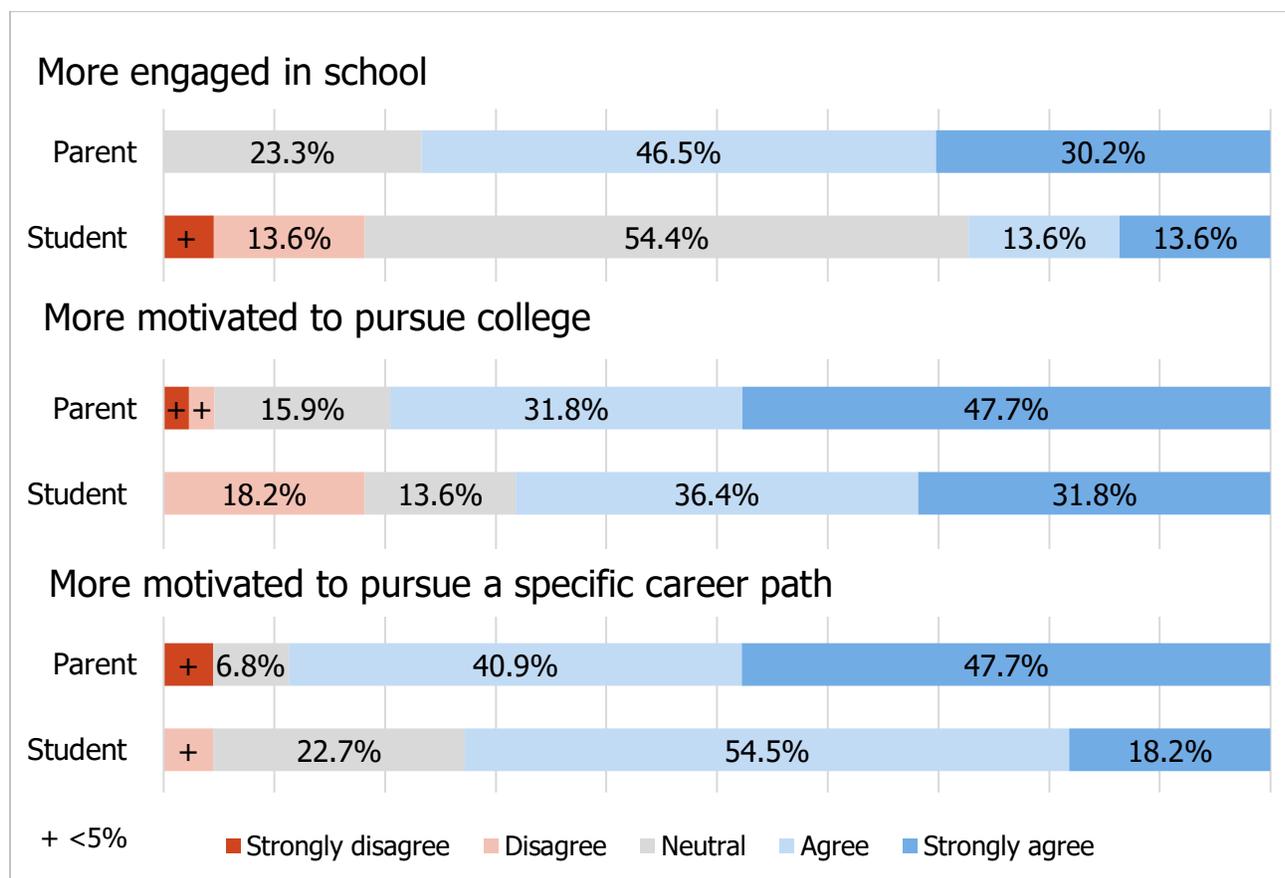


Figure 13. Student and Parent Impressions of the Programs Lasting Impact

Students provided insights into the program’s lasting impact in other areas as well. Four months after completing the program, over 85% of students indicated that they feel the program has had a positive impact on their beliefs about their ability to shape the world around them. About 70% of students indicated that they feel they are more open to connecting with new people as a result of the program. About two-thirds indicate that they continue to apply the Dent mindsets, as well as skills they learned over the summer.

In open-ended comments, students identified the lessons that stayed with them four months later. These included being open, persistence, and the importance of communication, cooperation, and teamwork. Additional comments included being

supportive, learning one's limits, networking/working with clients, and that it is okay to fail.

The two most frequent responses to how these lessons continue to be applied were the idea of teamwork and working with others, along with staying motivated. Students next reported that continuing to work on difficult tasks and having the attitude of not giving up as lessons they continued to practice. Others noted they now think about problems differently and are more willing to step out of their comfort zones. Finally, students commented that they are better listeners and are generally nicer to others.

When asked about future career paths, responses identified a wide range of possibilities, listed here in order of frequency (Some students provided more than one response): Creative (writing, film, photography, acting, dance); computer science; medicine/psychology; business; engineering; law; culinary; graphic design; sports; political science.

Parents also expressed positive impressions of the program's impact in several other areas. Over 80% of parents expressed that they feel that participating in the program improved their teenager's sense of agency and control over their learning, as well as their overall maturity and sense of responsibility. About three-quarters indicated that they have observed improvements in social skills, and about two-thirds indicated they have seen an increase in motivation in school. A full breakdown of these results (for both students and parents) is provided in the Appendix.

**Net promoter score.** The final item on the end of program student survey asked students to provide a "net promoter score" (see Table 2). This item was also posed to students on the four-month follow-up survey. It measured how likely they would be to recommend the program to others on a scale of 0 – 10, where 0 = "not at all likely," and 10 = "extremely likely." Similar to what students reported at the end of previous summers (see Ross et al., 2018; Ross et al., 2019, and Ross et al., 2020<sup>8</sup>), at the close of summer 2021, students were highly likely to recommend the program to others. Roughly 60% of participants provided the highest recommendation (10) and just under 90% gave ratings of eight or higher. These positive trends were also largely present, albeit to a slightly lesser extent, on the four-month follow-up survey. Here, just under 40% of participants

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<sup>8</sup> Ross, S.M., Laurenzano, M., Reilly, J.M., Eisinger, J.M., & Latham, G. (2018). *An Evaluation of Dent Education's Bet on Baltimore Summer Program*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.

Ross, S.M., Laurenzano, M., & Reilly, J.M. (2019). *An Evaluation of Dent Education's Bet on Baltimore Summer Program – Year 2*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research and Reform in Education.

Ross, S.M., Laurenzano, M., & Reilly, J.M. (2020). *An Evaluation of Dent Education's Bet on Baltimore Summer Program – Year 3*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research and Reform in Education.

provided the highest rating, and about 70% provided ratings of eight or higher. When asked about future participation, four students out of 22 respondents indicated they would not participate in future Bet on Baltimore programs for various reasons, including they did not know their plans for next summer, they were leaving for college, they wanted a different experience, or they found the program boring. Final comments reflected the students' appreciation for the opportunities given to them through their participation.

Table 2  
*Overall Findings: Net Promoter Score*

<i>I would recommend the program to others...</i>	<i>Percentage Post-Program</i>	<i>Percentage 3-Month Follow-Up</i>
0 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
1 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
2 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
3 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
4 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
5 (Detractor)	2.7	0.0
6 (Detractor)	2.7	10.5
7 (Passive)	5.4	21.1
8 (Passive)	21.6	15.8
9 (Promoter)	5.4	15.8
10 (Promoter)	62.2	36.8

**Program likes.** When asked what they liked the most about the program, a majority of student responses cited the sense of community and meeting new people. Even though this summer's program was held virtually, students were still able to make connections with peers, coaches, mentors, and entrepreneurs. Students next reported that they liked learning new skills and the hands-on activities made available to them.

Other commonly reported "likes" were having opportunities and choice related to tracks, as well as being in a safe space that was supportive and inclusive, giving everyone a voice. As one student noted,

*I like how the program was so welcoming and positive all the time. The program showed me that anyone can truly make a Dent, through the many creators and inventors that are in the program. I learned new things and even failed, but in the end I ended up succeeding.*

Students equally liked the creative freedom they were afforded, as well as participating in something that had an impact. One student noted,

*I liked the creative youth led events that were held this summer. It was way more youth led than last year and it's empowering to see that.*

Additional positive experiences included collaboration/teamwork, that it was fun, getting paid, and the Food for Thought speakers. Finally, students enjoyed working with their coaches and specifically highlighted having access to a wellness coach as a positive component of the program.

Returning students were asked how the program differed from 2020. A majority said this summer's program was more engaging and provided more creative opportunities. An equal number said that it was more welcoming and diverse, and they were able to work with more people. A few reported it was more organized and provided improved Zoom access and online functionality. One student pointed out that although the program was virtual, there were a few in-person activities able to be scheduled, which allowed students to make a more personal connection to their peers. Conversely, two returning students said they were less involved this year, primarily because they held a Denternship. One student explained,

*Last year, I do feel like I was more able to connect with the other students in my cohort. Because of the nature of the Denternship track, the students spend less time with each other and their coach, and more time with the different organizations they're working with. Because of that, this year I felt like I wasn't able to build the same level of connection with the others in my track.*

**Recommendations.** Students offered suggestions for improvement in the open-ended comments on the post-survey, although a majority did not offer any suggestions. The recommendations that were provided include:

- More track options (such as culinary and STEM)
- Less introduction and more time for track activities
- More engaging group activities, such as career-building lessons
- More student-led opportunities
- In person if possible
- Improve communication: provide clarification on tracks, projects, expectations
- Improve organization and planning
- Increase collaboration opportunities between Denterns and others in the program
- Choose more relevant FFT speakers/have fewer FFT speakers

### *Coach Focus Groups*

Virtual focus groups were conducted with a total of nine coaches (60% of total) from across sites, to gather feedback on their experiences and perceptions of participating in the summer program. Questions directly addressed their perceptions of student engagement with the program activities and impacts of the program on students'

interests in education and careers. The focus group instrument is displayed in Appendix C of this report.

**Background.** Participants were nine coaches from the Bet on Baltimore summer program (seven women and two men). Three were educators, two were college students, two were entrepreneurs, and there was one artist and one personal trainer. Almost all coaches had previous experience working with youth-oriented programs in the past, including summer or sports camps, YouthWorks, and STEM camp. Two coaches participated in the Bet on Baltimore program last year.

**Coach recruitment.** As in previous years, coaches learned about the program through a variety of sources, including colleagues, friends, or were returning Bet on Baltimore coaches. Additional sources were the Community Impact Internships program and the Baltimore Educational Scholarship Trust. Coaches joined the program for several reasons, including wanting to make an impact; a desire to empower the next generation of designers; wanting to share their own skills and experience as designers and makers; a desire to teach; and an interest in seeing education outside of a typical content-based curriculum.

**Student recruitment.** As in prior years, coaches reported that the driving force behind student involvement was the ability to get paid while learning a specific skill. Additional motivations were noted, specifically for students who are shy or introverted, and included the opportunity to work in a virtual environment while also meeting people outside of their normal routine (such as school) and the chance to engage in a social space with their peers.

The broader discussion touched on areas related to engagement, professional development, and coach perceptions of the program. Several themes emerged from the focus group discussions and are presented here:

**Student engagement.** Due to delivering the program in a virtual format in the summer of 2021, coaches reported that gauging student engagement was difficult. In general, mixed levels of engagement and participation were reported, with levels ranging from one-third to one-half of students in certain tracks. Common among coaches' experience was that students would actively participate in the morning but then be "silent" after lunch. It was not uncommon for students to have their videos off, to be online, but not participate. On the other hand, one coach reported having relatively high participation, even more than they expected. Some sites did not require online participation all day; following morning instruction, students worked independently, and some coaches noted that practice positively impacted engagement and participation.

As reported last year, coaches noted challenges to engagement over the course of the summer, many surrounding the access to technology and the use of a virtual platform. Once again, not all students had a laptop and had to participate using a smart

phone or iPad, limiting access to certain activities that could not be utilized on anything other than a laptop. Internet connectivity continues to plague participants in Baltimore City, where Internet access is frequently inconsistent.

Many coaches noted the challenge in knowing whether students were actively participating when they could not actually see them since many students would log on but not turn on their cameras. In addition, some students were attending summer school and could not always attend the Bet on Baltimore program every day. Finally, since the program was remote, some students were out of state, which some coaches believe impacted their motivation or interest in daily participation. Overall, coaches described student participation as “mixed levels of engagement” and “engaged, but not all of the time.”

***Professional development.*** Program coaches participated in a weeklong onboarding prior to the program’s start, delivered by Dent Education. When asked if they were adequately prepared to instruct the site they were leading, coaches responded, “yes and no.” Coaches noted that the training introduced everything but lacked depth, and there was no clear understanding of how the information should be delivered as a curriculum. The library of resources was helpful, but some coaches did not fully understand what was needed or how those resources could be utilized. As one pointed out, unless you were an experienced coach, you needed more guidance as to what slides to present or how long to spend on a topic. Returning coaches reinforced this comment, saying they were more comfortable selecting resources, but that was because they had background knowledge and knew what they were looking for. New coaches reported not feeling prepared to teach the Dent curriculum. One coach was unsure of their overall role in the program. Both experienced and new coaches agreed that there was not enough time in the day or program to complete all the material and suggested that Dent start the training sooner, so it was not so “jam packed.” Many noted the training “tried to squeeze too much into one week; there was not enough time to learn everything.”

Coaches working with Denterns specifically wanted more instruction in establishing a regular 1:1 meeting schedule with each host to set expectations. As reported by these coaches, some hosts were less involved and more guidance on how to increase host engagement with students was desired, along with setting boundaries such as the number of hours per week students and hosts should interact.

On a positive note, coaches appreciated the creation of milestones, which they said were helpful for scheduling course material. Another helpful component of onboarding was the addition of speakers who helped coaches learn to create and facilitate an inclusive and welcoming space.

Both experienced and inexperienced coaches wanted more guidance on needs specific to their track or more site-specific training. As one coach shared, “...I was kind

of just figuring it out as I went.” Coaches wanted access to resources from previous years so that they were not reinventing the wheel for their track, or as one stated,

*I would have really, really enjoyed resources from former years. And I think we all just kind of got like general Power Points about design thinking and stuff that was helpful with teaching the students, but it wasn't as site specific as I probably would have wanted [it] to be.*

In addition, coaches expressed a desire for more coach-to-coach interaction to see what other tracks were doing and the ability to share resources from previous years. Along those lines, coaches expected more collaboration across sites and the opportunity to meet with other coaches prior to developing their programming. One coach shared,

*...it was kind of just like a, you know, attempt, fail. And then like, you know, figure it out as we were going, which was kind of good. But I also would have just liked to see examples of what they were doing in previous years so we could see what works, what doesn't and then how can we implement both of those?*

Finally, coaches mentioned they needed more clarity on the site supporter role and resources offered by Dent.

**Ongoing support.** Response to the topic of ongoing support revolved around three areas: site supporters, track creation, and available resources. There was mixed reaction among coaches regarding the value and usefulness of their site supporter. One returning coach reported that compared to last year, this year's site supporter “didn't do much” and only had “minimal” interaction with the coach and students. This sentiment was echoed by another coach who stated that their site supporter was “not really there too much, never engaged much with students.” This coach wanted assistance with increasing student participation, which was lagging. Yet another coach reported that they “had a few kids slip through the cracks” who were not fully engaged and needed more frequent check-ins, but the assistance provided by the site supporter came in the fourth week of the program, when any intervention was too late to have much of an impact.

On the other hand, two coaches reported having completely different experiences with their site supporter, noting their meetings were helpful and consistent. One coach depended on the site supporter to assist with equal team participation by dropping into specific groups to facilitate conversations. This coach indicated that the students viewed their site supporter as an authority figure who wasn't one of the coaches and, therefore, understood the need to respond accordingly.

The next area of concern regarding ongoing support centered on track creation. Many coaches expressed the desire to be more involved in designing the track they were leading. Coaches noted that based on their own experience, they could have made

valuable contributions to the track design, including suggestions that would have been more cost effective and time efficient. In addition, one coach stated that they did not meet the co-creators of their track or know about the co-creator process until onboarding and would have appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback that could have impacted the track activities.

However, another coach reported a completely opposite experience, noting they were able to co-create everything and worked collaboratively with creating milestones between coaches, site supporters, program managers, and students. Finally, one coach found the emphasis on meeting a client's needs as detrimental to teaching students that design is a tool for artistic expression versus a means to making money.

The third area that coaches reflected on was resources. One coach noted the need for resources in two domains: one for mental health and one for developing their track's skillset. Coaches reported that across tracks, students wanted to focus on mental health as an issue in the community, but that many coaches were not prepared to provide them with the type of support this required. Yet another coach reported that during the program they received necessary resources, such as Wi-fi and appropriate devices, but that when the program ended, students had to return devices, like microphones, making it impossible for them to continue working on their projects.

**Communication.** As in previous years, coaches reported that communication continues to be an area in need of improvement. Much of their feedback centered on the use of multiple channels within Slack for communicating, which were difficult to manage, as well as the frequency and volume of communications via Slack and email. Coaches reported difficulty in juggling multiple messaging platforms while trying to keep their students engaged and teach at the same time. As one coach noted, "it was a little hard to balance all that stuff out."

The timing of messages was also challenging, with communications sent early in the morning or late at night and coaches having to respond when their sessions were starting up in the morning. Messaging from different sources, such as site supporters and Dent management, was also confusing and sometimes contradictory. One coach summed up the issue this way:

*I would say probably less is more because sometimes it can be a little be repetitive. You're getting the same information from some emails you're getting on Slack. So it's like, I guess pick one, maybe?*

The frequency of meetings was also viewed as an inefficient use of coaches' time, where issues could have been communicated via one of the messaging platforms. Returning coaches admitted that the number of meetings had been reduced from last year, but that there were still too many. As one coach stated, "we weren't expected to

work past contracted hours, but there was no way that we couldn't" in an effort to keep up with their responsibilities.

Another area of concern for coaches was the lack of communication surrounding co-creators and co-coaches. Collaboration among these roles was seen as a missed opportunity regarding designing the tracks. One coach did not realize that the co-creator was not teaching in the track. Others saw an advantage in collaborating across tracks to enhance their programming but were not given an opportunity to do so.

**Overall program strengths.** Reiterating a common response heard over the past three years, coaches highlighted as a program strength the unique opportunity and practical experience made available to Baltimore City youth, neither of which are typically offered in a summer youth jobs program. Building relationships with peers, mentors, and successful entrepreneurs was identified as a rare opportunity for students and considered an important component of the program. Coaches reported that the diversity of FFT speakers, especially those from Baltimore, "really inspired the students."

Coaches frequently mentioned the sense of community that created a safe space for students to be comfortable and "free to be themselves" as an important program strength. Networking, hands-on opportunities, and access to resources were all noted as program strengths. Finally, one coach described the "transformative" experience provided by the program having witnessed students realize they have the power to affect change:

*Oh, I feel like I can actually get something accomplished in a short amount of time. We have an ability to...affect issues that I'm passionate about...it's a mindset shift with a decent percentage of them and it's like in that percentage, they do change pretty dramatically.*

**Program impact.** Coaches offered mixed opinions about the program's impact, with most coaches agreeing that the overall program goals were met for most students. Students were reported to become more competent in public speaking and presentation skills. However, much ambiguity that surrounded their response had to do with milestones: how they were written, when they were shared, and their intention. For example, some coaches expressed concern that the milestones were too client-driven and seemed to be focused on payment based on deliverables. One coach suggested that the milestones should have been based on student abilities and their effort rather than the product they delivered. This focus on delivering a product was professionally limiting for one coach, because to meet the milestones, students only used one graphic design program when there were other programs the coach wanted to explore.

Another coach noted that many of the milestones were dependent on other people's actions, which were out of the students' control. Yet another coach shared that they only discovered in the second week of the program that there would be weekly client meetings and students would be prototyping, which was not what the coach understood

as the purpose of the site. Still another coach explained that the program did what was intended but that students had to return gear needed to continue their own learning after the program ended. Finally, coaches had difficulty gauging the impact of the equity/social issues curriculum, noting that the students did not seem interested in talking about this topic.

***Program challenges.*** As in previous years, coaches faced both programmatic and technical challenges. Coaches wanted more direct input into curriculum development for their track, as well as having access to the previous year's program materials as a resource. New coaches lacked clarity on how to deliver the curriculum, especially with a multitude of resources available but no guidance as to how or what to choose. Coaches also reported being overwhelmed by the amount of information they were required to impart, along with tracking milestones and ensuring student engagement.

Coaches perceived Dent management to be "overloaded" and found it difficult to ask questions of them due to the Dent staff's workload. Additional staff, having consistent site support, or having an experienced coach at each site might have alleviated this challenge.

While communication seems to have improved somewhat over the past few years, this was also noted as a challenge in terms of the number of channels within platforms utilized for communicating by Dent management, as well as inconsistent messaging across multiple platforms. The frequency of meetings was a challenge as well. Coaches continue to struggle balancing all their program responsibilities — preparing lessons, monitoring milestones, responding to communications, maintaining student engagement, for example — in addition to teaching the curriculum. Some coaches expressed frustration in not being able to reach every student due to time limits, and what they perceive as the program's emphasis on students meeting deliverables and making money.

While some coaches praised the FFT speakers, others reported that they were not that helpful and did not really connect with their students. Coaches would like more flexibility and independence in scheduling FFT speakers to ensure a better "fit" with their students. In addition, coaches reported the number of platforms required to schedule FFT speakers, depending on whether they were site-specific or for the entire group, was confusing. Some coaches even suggested eliminating the FFT speakers so that students could use that time to do other things.

Coaches in the Denternship program reported uninvolved hosts as a challenge; for example, goals were set but the hosts did not check in with the students during the program. Finally, coaches noted that many students sign up not really understanding the program's expectations.

Technical challenges revolved around Internet connectivity and device access. As previously noted, some students did not have laptops and participated in program

activities on a smart phone or iPad, both of which have limitations. Coaches reported having to find supplemental learning resources to encourage students to self-learn material they could not cover during the program (such as Procreate) but were of interest to the students.

***Recommendations.*** Despite some challenges, overall perceptions of the program were highly positive. Coaches agreed that the Bet on Baltimore program was impactful for most students. Suggested changes for program improvement include:

- Start coach training sooner; onboarding should be extended
- Provide more clarity on who is responsible for creating and teaching what curriculum, especially the Dent Mindsets
- Offer more content specific training
- Facilitate coach:coach training and provide access to previous year's curriculum
- Provide a curriculum development guide (a structured document that defines learning goals, objective, experiences, resources, etc., that make up a specific educational program)
- Have curriculum prepared for all six weeks of the program in advance of program start
- Reduce the number of meetings; make meetings shorter or communicate meeting information through Slack where appropriate
- Allow coaches more input into FFT speakers
- Allow coaches more input into creating milestones
- Create milestones that are more focused on skill and ability and not dependent on client needs
- Allow for expanded instruction on specific design tools, not just what is required to make a product
- Add staff to Dent management or provide more effective site support
- Facilitate collaboration between sites, allowing students the opportunity to share with their peers and learn what others were doing in the program
- Offer college and career curriculum resources in all tracks; many students lack "college knowledge"

## Discussion

The purpose of the Year 4 evaluation was to continue examining program implementation processes and outcomes focused on student participation, perceptions of their experiences, and attitudes and aspirations regarding future education and career interests. In 2021, the program continued with 10 sites but saw a drop in enrollment, from 138 to 93 students. Similar tracks were offered from last summer to broaden program appeal and provide exposure to additional areas of interest, along with the addition of the Denternship program.

Ultimately, this project sought to examine students' experiences and perceptions of the program regarding engagement, activities, benefits, and challenges (RQ 2). It also sought to examine the degree that students' self-efficacy, attitudes toward school, and education and career aspirations changed over time (RQ 3). As with what has been found in previous years of this project, participants continue to hold highly positive perceptions of the Dent Education experience. By the end of the summer 2021 session, the overwhelming majority of students reported that they possess many of the attitudes that Dent Education attempts to instill and regularly exhibit many of the behaviors that the program reinforces. These included attitudes related to self-efficacy and growth mindset, and behaviors related to curiosity, collaboration, self-awareness, and self-management. While it is worth noting that students frequently reported on the pre-survey that they believed they exhibited many of these attitudes and behaviors before they started the program, trends suggest that students still made significant growth in many of these areas over the summer. Of note, from the pre-survey to the post-survey, students made statistically significant growth on roughly half of the items assessed – a total of 14 areas. Similar to what has been found in evaluations of the 2021, 2020 and 2019 program sessions (see Ross et al., 2019; 2020; 2021), the majority of these areas fell within the domains of collaboration and self-management. By the end of the program this summer students were significantly more likely than they were at the beginning to report that they view problems as opportunities to make a difference, believe in their ability to shape the world around them, and believe that working with others can help them reach goals in creative, new ways. In fact, roughly 90% of program participants expressed these views after completing Dent this summer. As it relates to behavioral changes (RQ 4), students were more likely at the close of the program than they were at the beginning to indicate that they pay attention, even when there are distractions, are focused when they work independently, consistently remember and follow directions, and are consistently respectful of other people's views when they disagree.

Four months after the program's conclusion, these trends appeared to largely endure. On the follow-up program survey, over 85% of students indicated that they feel the program has had a positive impact on their beliefs about their ability to shape the world around them and about two-thirds indicate that they continue to apply the Dent mindsets, as well as skills they learned over the summer. Based on data gathered through the parent survey, parent's observations largely mirrored these findings. Over 80%

expressed that they feel that participating in the program improved their teenager's sense of agency and control over their learning, as well as their overall maturity and sense of responsibility. Parents and student alike indicated that they feel the program will have a lasting impact on students' motivation to attend college and pursue specific career paths.

When viewed alongside the findings from the other data collection measures, these results are certainly encouraging of the program's ability to influence real-world outcomes for students. RQ 5 addressed the coaches' experiences in and perceptions of the program regarding personal roles and activities, student outcomes, benefits, and challenges. During focus group discussions, coaches reiterated that the program strengths include providing access to opportunity and experience that BCPS students otherwise might not have. Building relationships with peers, mentors, and successful entrepreneurs was identified as a rare opportunity for students and considered an important component of the program. The sense of community experienced by students created a safe space for students "to be themselves." Networking, hands-on opportunities, and access to resources were all noted as program strengths. Most coaches agree that the overall program goals were met for most students. However, the introduction of milestones seems to have been a source of confusion: how they were written, when they were shared, and their intention. Coaches were concerned that the milestones were too client-driven and seemed to be focused more on producing a product rather than measuring student abilities and effort.

The nature of the summer program activities for each of the 10 cohorts (RQ 1), was once again significantly impacted by COVID-19 in both program delivery and impact. Program developers had to ensure that students were supplied with digital tools to participate, with some students using a variety of different tools (like cell phones and tablets). This posed challenges to the consistency of program delivery. Coaches were more comfortable teaching over Zoom, although challenges continue in terms of connectivity and engagement when using a virtual learning platform. The greatest impact may have been the lost personal connection between coaches and students and students and their peers. However, students specifically expressed gratitude in their ability to connect to coaches, mentors, and peers as contributing to their positive experience in the 2021 program. Students repeatedly commented on the social-emotional benefits of participation, specifically regarding the program's inclusive and welcoming environment. This indicates that the coaches were successful in not only delivering the program with fidelity but also attending to their students' mental health and emotional needs. The addition of a wellness coach was also a positive enhancement and should probably be continued given the current state of the pandemic and the possibility of virtual learning becoming more of a norm. Preparing the coaches to better address social-emotional and mental health issues would also be a positive enhancement to their training.

Taken in combination, these findings are suggestive of the program's impact during the summer of 2021. The program continues to be very well received by students and was successful given the ongoing challenge of delivering content virtually in the face

of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. Further, the positive survey results provide for two important conclusions regarding the program's potential impact. Of note, results of behavioral items that focused on having students report the prevalence they exhibited certain behaviors "in the past 30 days" suggest that during the Bet on Baltimore program, students regularly exhibited many behaviors that they likely did not regularly exhibit during the school year. We also infer, that by the end of the summer, these behaviors and beliefs may be becoming habits for students. Additional data gathered this year through surveys with parents and follow-up surveys with students administered several months after the program's conclusion largely reinforce these impressions.

When considered alongside the findings from this project's previous years— notably, the evaluation results from the summers of 2020, 2019, and 2018—results from this fourth year are highly consistent. Across these evaluations, the research team has sought to understand students' experiences and level of engagement with the program, as well as the program's impact on areas such as students' behavior related to pursuing goals, understanding and application of the Dent Mindsets, self-efficacy, attitudes toward school, and education and career aspirations, among others. Data collected through the pre-and post-program surveys each summer, along with data collected through student focus groups, and more recently, parent surveys, has provided a robust and consistent picture that has addressed these areas of inquiry. As has been found in previous years of this evaluation, data from these activities suggests that students' experiences with Bet on Baltimore are both positive and meaningful with regard to achieving these desired outcomes. Given the repetition of these findings across multiple years, future research may be best served exploring different areas of inquiry along with novel research questions. Focuses on topics including program outcomes for alumni in the years after they complete Bet on Baltimore, as well as parent perceptions of the program's impact, represent particularly relevant and thus far under-examined topics. As the program continues to expand and develop, instructional design research may also be of benefit to potentially enhance the quality and consistency of the program's coach and student-facing curricular materials. Considerations such as these may indeed be fruitful – Dent Education has grown noticeably since its initial pilot program in the summer of 2017 and continues to expand annually. As the program grows and evolves in the years ahead, research to address questions such as these can play an important role in informing the program's continued success.

### *Recommendations*

Key recommendations from the overall data collection activities reiterate the central suggestions made last year, as well as ideas more specific to the latest implementation:

- Provide coaches a curriculum guide with clear explanations of available resources.

- Clearly define coach responsibilities at the outset to provide clarity of expectations.
- Continue to refine the curriculum so that implementation is more realistic in a six- week window.
- Extend the coach training period and provide more content specific training.
- Continue to enlist a diverse selection of speakers during Food for Thought that are representative of the students participating in the program and relevant to their track.
- Streamline meetings to ensure efficient use of coaches' time.
- Improve communication between Dent and coaches and between coaches and students.
- Reduce the number of communication platforms used to disseminate information to coaches.

Implementing these further refinements could help improve the program's overall effectiveness and sustainability, particularly as it continues to expand its offerings to a wider audience. At this point in the program's development, it may benefit Dent Education to initiate an instructional design review of its curriculum, which could identify learner and organization needs, determine instructional goals, design instructional strategies, and inform implementation of training.

## Appendix A: Student Survey Protocol

# **Bet on Baltimore - Student Survey – Summer 2021**

### **Evaluation of Dent Education’s Bet on Baltimore Summer Program Student Survey**

Welcome to the Bet on Baltimore summer program student survey. This survey asks about YOUR experiences participating in the summer program. There is no right or wrong answer to any question. Please read each question carefully. Your responses are confidential. All results are stored in secure databases maintained by the research team. Thank you for taking this survey. Please answer the questions in this survey as accurately and honestly as you can. Give the best answer for you, even if it is hard to make up your mind. It should take about 15 minutes to complete.

By completing this survey, you are consenting to be in this research study. Your participation is voluntary and you can stop at any time. If you choose not to complete the survey, there will be no penalty.

1. Did you attend a Dent program last summer?

2. What is your gender?

Male

Female

Non-binary

I prefer not to answer

3. How old are you?

13

14

15

16

17

18

19



4. What is your race or ethnicity?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
  - Asian
  - Black or African American
  - Hispanic or Latino
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - Two or More
  - White
  - I prefer not to answer
- 

5. What site do you attend for Bet on Baltimore?

Social Enterprise Accelerator  
Start-up Garage  
Dented Sound Productions  
Design Studio  
Made @ Dent  
Social Innovation: Stories for Impact  
Social Innovation: West Baltimore Innovation Lab  
Social Innovation  
Denternship

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If past 30 days how often did you...

	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Often	Almost all of the time
Ask questions to deepen your understanding?	<input type="radio"/>				
Actively listen to others?	<input type="radio"/>				
Think about a problem from different points of view?	<input type="radio"/>				

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I view problems as opportunities to make a difference.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe in my ability to shape the world around me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I believe that, with effort, I can get better at anything.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am comfortable risking failure in order to achieve my goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with others can help me reach goals in creative, new ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can work with someone who has different opinions than mine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy working together with other students my age	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In past 30 days how often did you...	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Often	Almost all of the time
Demonstrate respect for others?	<input type="radio"/>				
Engage in teamwork?	<input type="radio"/>				
Express appreciation for my teammates?	<input type="radio"/>				
(Question is for post survey only)					
Adjust your communication style depending on your audience?	<input type="radio"/>				
Present your ideas clearly to others?	<input type="radio"/>				
Reflect on and learn from past experiences?	<input type="radio"/>				
Ask for feedback from others?	<input type="radio"/>				
Thought about how my actions impact others?	<input type="radio"/>				
Come to class prepared?	<input type="radio"/>				
Remember and follow directions?	<input type="radio"/>				
Get my work done right away instead of waiting until the last minute?	<input type="radio"/>				

Pay attention, even when there were distractions?	<input type="radio"/>				
Focus when I worked independently?	<input type="radio"/>				
Carefully listen to other people's points of view?	<input type="radio"/>				
Show respect for other people's views when they disagreed with me?	<input type="radio"/>				

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I am confident in my public speaking abilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My ideas persuade other people to take action.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Open-Ended Questions (POST SURVEY ONLY)

6. What did you like most about the program?
7. Has the program changed you in any way? If so, how?
8. Because of this program I am more....
9. Because of this program I now believe...
10. Would you recommend the program to others? (circle one)

Not at all likely likely

Extremely

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

11. If you participated in Bet on Baltimore **last year**, how was this year's experience different?

12. What recommendations do you have for improving the program next year?

Thank you for taking this survey!

## Appendix B: Student Follow-up Survey

# **Bet on Baltimore – Follow-up Student Survey – Fall 2021**

## **Evaluation of Dent Education’s Bet on Baltimore Summer Program Follow-up Student Survey**

Welcome to the Bet on Baltimore follow-up student survey. This survey asks about YOUR experiences since completing the summer program about three months ago. The questions are designed to get your perceptions of any long-term impacts of the program. There is no right or wrong answer to any question. Please read each question carefully. Your responses are confidential. All results are stored in secure databases maintained by the research team. Thank you for taking this survey. Please answer the questions in this survey as accurately and honestly as you can. Give the best answer for you, even if it is hard to make up your mind. It should take about 15 minutes to complete.

By completing this survey, you are consenting to be in this research study. Your participation is voluntary and you can stop at any time. If you choose not to complete the survey, there will be no penalty.

13. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- I prefer not to answer

14. How old are you?

- 13
  - 14
  - 15
  - 16
  - 17
  - 18
  - 19
-

15. What is your race or ethnicity?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
  - Asian
  - Black or African American
  - Hispanic or Latino
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - Two or More
  - White
  - I prefer not to answer
- 

4. What site did you attend for Bet on Baltimore?

Social Enterprise Accelerator  
Start-up Garage  
Dented Sound Productions  
Design Studio  
Made @ Dent  
Social Innovation: Stories for Impact  
Social Innovation: West Baltimore Innovation Lab  
Social Innovation  
Denternship

5. What school do you currently attend?

6. What grade are you in?

7. Are you participating in any Dent Education programs at this time?

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How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Because of my participation in Bet on Baltimore, I am...	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
More engaged in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More motivated to pursue college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More motivated to pursue a specific career-path	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More likely to apply the Dent Mindsets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### Open-Ended Questions

8. What were the biggest lessons you took with you from the summer?
9. How do you apply these lessons into your life today? (give examples)
10. Which of the Dent Mindsets has resonated with you the most since you completed the program?
11. Since the summer, to what extent, if any, have you continued to engage in the Dent "project" you completed?
12. Are you planning on participating in any Dent programs in the future?
13. Final comments:

Thank you for taking this survey!

## Appendix C: Coach Focus Group Protocol

### Bet on Baltimore Coach Focus Group Questions

*Hello. My name is [insert name] with the Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University – Thank you for agreeing to participate as part of our evaluation of the Bet on Baltimore program. We are conducting this evaluation in order to examine the program’s effectiveness, including its coach preparation. We are also interested in learning your perceptions of the program.*

*We would like to invite you to participate in the described research project and participate in a brief focus group discussion. You do not have to participate if you don’t want to, and if you choose to participate, you can stop your participation at any time.*

*Do you agree to participate in this interview?*

\_\_\_ Yes, the participant orally consented to participate

\_\_\_ No, the participant did not consent to participate

*There are no right or wrong answers, just different opinions. We hope that you will be honest in your responses. The focus group should take about 45 minutes. Your responses will be combined with those of other participants and no information that could identify you will be reported.*

### Background

1. What is your background? (Teacher, entrepreneur, etc.; how did you become involved?) What site do you lead?
2. Why did you decide to work with the program?
3. Have you associated with any similar type programs in the past? (Youth summer programs; programs focusing on entrepreneurship?)

### Student Participation and Engagement

4. Why do you think students enrolled in this program? What is the value to the students in participating?
5. How engaged would you say your students are in the Bet on Baltimore program activities? (prompt for examples)

6. Have there been challenges to engagement (such as absenteeism, behavior issues, online participation, etc.)?

### **Professional development**

7. Were you adequately prepared to instruct the Bet on Baltimore program course you are leading? Why or why not?
8. What additional preparation, if any, do you recommend for future Bet on Baltimore coaches?
9. Have you had experience with online teaching and/or distance learning?
10. What type of ongoing support, if any, have you received? Has this support been adequate?

Communications:

### **Bet on Baltimore perceptions**

11. What are the overall strengths of the program?
12. What are the challenges?
13. Overall, do you feel that the program impacted students this summer the way that it was designed to? If so, to what extent? (e.g., achieved what you hoped for most students? For all students? Exceeded expectations? Etc.)

### **Recommendations**

14. What changes, if any, do you recommend in the Bet on Baltimore program?

## Appendix D: Student Survey – Overall Results

Table A1

*Overall Findings: Student Survey Belief Item Frequencies*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I view problems as opportunities to make a difference	0.0	5.1	13.6	61.0	20.3
	0.0	0.0	10.8	54.1	35.1
I believe in my ability to shape the world around me	0.0	3.4	10.2	66.1	20.3
	0.0	2.7	10.8	35.1	51.4
I believe that, with effort, I can get better at anything	0.0	0.0	5.1	54.2	40.7
	0.0	0.0	2.7	35.1	62.2
I am comfortable risking failure in order to achieve my goals	0.0	6.8	22.0	49.2	22.0
	0.0	5.4	8.1	56.8	29.7
Working with others can help me reach goals in creative, new ways	0.0	1.7	16.9	52.5	28.8
	2.7	2.7	5.4	45.9	43.2
I can work with someone who has different opinions than mine	1.7	3.4	23.7	50.8	20.3
	0.0	2.7	16.2	43.2	37.8
I enjoy working together with other students my age	0.0	1.7	22.0	54.2	22.0
	2.7	0.0	18.9	35.1	43.2
I am confident in my public speaking abilities	7.0	14.0	28.1	26.3	24.6
	8.1	8.1	21.6	45.9	16.2
My ideas persuade other people to take action**	0.0	7.0	38.6	33.3	21.1
	0.0	0.0	29.7	43.2	27.0

*Note 1.* For each item, the top row represents the “pre-survey” and the number below that represents the “post-survey” result.

*Note 2.* Statistically significant pre- to post-survey growth is denoted as \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table A2  
*Overall Findings: Student Survey Behavior Item Frequencies*

In the past 30 days, how often did you do each of the following...

	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Often	Almost all the time
Think about a problem from different points of view	3.3	6.6	36.1	32.8	21.3
	0.0	0.0	15.4	30.8	53.8
Demonstrate respect for others	0.0	0.0	5.3	29.3	64.9
	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.2	83.8
Engage in teamwork	7.0	3.5	28.1	28.1	33.3
	0.0	2.7	5.4	32.4	59.5
Adjust your communication style depending on your audience	3.5	1.8	10.5	45.6	38.6
	0.0	0.0	10.8	32.4	56.8
Presented your ideas clearly to others	1.8	5.3	26.3	43.9	22.8
	0.0	0.0	13.5	43.2	43.2
Reflected on and learned from past experiences	1.8	0.0	22.8	40.4	35.1
	0.0	2.7	5.4	45.9	45.9
Asked for feedback from others	1.8	12.3	29.8	29.8	26.3
	0.0	8.1	13.5	32.4	45.9
Thought about how your actions impact others	1.8	0.0	22.8	40.4	35.1
	0.0	5.4	10.8	35.1	48.6
Came to class prepared	0.0	0.0	15.8	47.4	36.8
	0.0	0.0	2.7	29.7	67.6
Remembered and followed directions	0.0	0.0	14.0	45.6	40.4
	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.0	73.0
Got your work done right away instead of waiting until the last minute	3.5	10.5	36.8	35.1	14.0
	0.0	2.7	8.1	45.9	43.2
Paid attention, even when there were distractions	0.0	7.0	35.1	42.1	15.8

	0.0	2.7	16.2	35.1	45.9
Were focused when you worked independently	0.0	0.0	24.6	35.1	40.4
	0.0	2.7	5.4	37.8	54.1
Carefully listened to other people's points of view	1.8	0.0	15.8	36.8	45.6
	0.0	0.0	2.7	40.5	56.8
Was respectful of other people's views when they disagreed with you	0.0	0.0	15.8	47.4	36.8
	0.0	0.0	5.4	32.4	62.2
Expressed appreciation for my teammates	-	-	-	-	-
	0.0	2.7	13.5	18.9	64.9

*Note 1.* For each item, the top row represents the "pre-survey" and the number below that represents the "post-survey" result.

*Note 2.* Statistically significant pre- to post-survey growth is denoted as \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table A3

*Overall Findings: Net Promoter Score*

<i>I would recommend the program to others...</i>	<i>Percentage Post-Program</i>	<i>Percentage 4-Month Follow-Up</i>
0 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
1 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
2 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
3 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
4 (Detractor)	0.0	0.0
5 (Detractor)	2.7	0.0
6 (Detractor)	2.7	10.5
7 (Passive)	5.4	21.1
8 (Passive)	21.6	15.8
9 (Promoter)	5.4	15.8
10 (Promoter)	62.2	36.8

## Appendix E: Student Survey – Follow-Up Results

Table A4

### *Student Survey – Four-Month Follow-Up*

Because of my participation in Bet on Baltimore, I am...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
More engaged in school	4.5	13.6	54.5	13.6	13.6
More motivated to pursue college	0.0	18.2	13.6	36.4	31.8
More motivated to pursue a specific career path	0.0	4.5	22.7	54.5	18.2
More likely to apply the Dent Mindsets	4.5	0.0	31.8	36.4	27.3
More open to connecting with new people	4.5	9.1	13.6	50.0	22.7
Believe in my ability to shape the world around me	0.0	0.0	13.6	63.6	22.7
I still practice the skills I learned this summer	4.5	4.5	22.7	36.4	31.8

## Appendix F: Parent Survey – Overall Results

Table A5

### *Parent Survey Item Frequencies – Part I*

“Participating in the Bet on Baltimore Program has increased/improved my child’s...”

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Motivation in School	0.0	0.0	31.8	38.6	29.5
Interest in attending college	2.3	2.3	15.9	31.8	47.7
Interest in starting a career	4.5	0.0	6.8	40.9	47.7
Sense of agency and control of their learning	0.0	0.0	15.9	38.6	45.5
Social skills	0.0	4.7	18.6	37.2	39.5
Maturity/sense of responsibility	0.0	0.0	18.6	39.5	41.9
Engagement with school and learning	0.0	0.0	23.3	46.5	30.2

Table A6

### *Parent Survey Item Frequencies – Part II*

“In the past 30 days, how often did your child do each of the following...”

	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Often	Almost all the time
Demonstrate respect for others	0.0	0.0	2.3	22.7	75.0
Engage in teamwork	0.0	0.0	9.1	43.2	47.7
Express appreciation for their teammates	0.0	0.0	13.6	47.7	38.6
Adjust their communication style depending on their audience	0.0	6.8	18.2	43.2	31.8
Present their ideas clearly to others	0.0	2.3	18.2	40.9	38.6
Reflect on and learn from past experiences	2.3	2.3	11.4	50.0	34.1
Ask for feedback from others	2.3	15.9	25.0	34.1	22.7

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Think about how their actions impact others	0.0	0.0	25.0	29.5	45.5
Came to class prepared	0.0	0.0	6.8	38.6	54.5
Remember and follow directions	0.0	0.0	9.1	40.9	50.0
Get their work done right away instead of waiting until the last minute	0.0	4.5	34.1	29.5	31.8
Pay attention, even when there were distractions	0.0	0.0	22.7	47.7	29.5
Focus when they worked independently	0.0	0.0	13.6	38.6	47.7
Carefully listen to other people's points of view	0.0	0.0	18.2	47.7	34.1
Respect other people's views when they disagreed with them	0.0	4.5	15.9	34.1	45.5

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