# CARE and Promise
# Program Evaluation
# 2016–17 Cohort Report

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## Introduction

The CARE intervention program and the Natomas Promise program are Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) community school programs that serve seventh through twelfth grade students in Sacramento County. These programs were built through partnerships between the SCOE, select school districts, and community partners. The programs offer instruction through an alternative educational model and aim to increase graduation rates and decrease high school dropout rates and the number of students referred to juvenile probation.

CARE and Promise program environments utilize a small, classroom setting to foster close relationships with students and teachers and support personal accountability. It provides the individual support that students need to succeed academically, while helping them maintain their connection to their school and community. The programs are located on a school campus of the host district and students are included in the school's elective and physical education courses. Students in the program are also able to participate in extracurricular activities including athletics. The program utilizes the adopted curriculum and course of study outlined by the host districts and the teachers are SCOE instructors. The Promise program differs slightly from the CARE program in its credit completion model (independent study available to eleventh and twelfth grade students) and its setting at a continuation high school. The CARE and Promise programs operated at 11 schools and 8 districts in the 2016–17 academic year (Table 1).

Table 1. CARE and Promise Program Locations for 2016–17

| Program | School | District |
|---------|--------|----------|
| CARE | Center HS | Center |
| CARE | Wilson C. Riles | Center |
| CARE | Harriet Eddy Middle | Elk Grove |
| CARE | Laguna Creek HS | Elk Grove |
| CARE | Mitchell Middle | Folsom Cordova |
| CARE | Sutter Middle | Folsom Cordova |
| CARE | McCaffrey Middle | Galt Elementary |
| CARE | Riverview Middle | River Delta |
| CARE | Encina Preparatory HS | San Juan |
| CARE | Foothill HS | Twin Rivers |
| Promise | Discovery HS | Natomas |

## Program Evaluation

The intent of the CARE and Promise programs are to reduce behavioral problems, increase school engagement, and provide internal support structures for positive student outcomes such as earning a high school diploma and engaging in career pathways during and after exiting the program. The purpose of this program evaluation is to assess the short and long-term outcomes of students who enter the program, identify best practices and ideal candidates for the program, and provide information to inform program change.

To learn about the effect of the program on student outcomes, data for students was analyzed for the year prior to the program and the year in the program. Later follow-up would include the review of outcomes for the year after the cohort entry year. Variables included in the analyses were compiled from multiple sources to assess program impact and determine which variables were related to positive student outcomes. The data collected and variable selected were:

- Time in the CARE or Promise program
- Attendance rates and chronic absenteeism (90% attendance or less)
- Suspension rates and severity of offense
- Expulsions
- Demographics
- Grades in core courses (before, during, and after program)
- CAASPP Smarter Balanced ELA and math achievement levels
- Mobility (number of schools attended during the prior two years)
- Students' extracurricular activities and program feedback
- Parent feedback about program and student success
- Staff program feedback

For each program evaluation year, a new cohort of students will be identified and the reports will reflect the progress of the cohorts as they move through the program.

## Methodology

Data for the evaluation were collected from several sources including district records, state enrollment records, and surveys. The initial identification of students for the 2016–17 cohort and baseline demographics were obtained through the SCOE Student Information System (SIS). Once identified, students' enrollment history was verified using the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). Requests for students' prior year data were sent to the appropriate districts that were participating in the program. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the SCOE and the participating districts provided for the sharing of data of students in the program. Current year data was obtained through the SCOE SIS. Student, parent, and staff surveys were administered in the current year to gather additional information about the perceptions and impact of the program.

## Cohort Participants and Demographics

The 2016–17 cohort included students who were enrolled in the CARE and Promise programs during any portion of the fall term of 2016–17. This resulted in an initial group of 235 students, distributed across 11 program sites (Table 2) and six grade levels (Figure 1). The cohort included seven students who had been incarcerated at the youth detention facility and consisted of a larger proportion of male students (60%). Three ethnic groups comprised the majority of students; 31% were Hispanic, 25% were African American, and 31% were White (Figure 2).

Table 2.  Enrollment of 2016–17 Cohort by Program Site

| CARE and Promise Program Enrollment 2016–17 | 2016–17 Cohort Count |
|---|---|
| CARE - Center High School | 23 |
| CARE - Encina Preparatory High School | 23 |
| CARE - Foothill High School | 18 |
| CARE - Harriet Eddy Middle | 24 |
| CARE - Laguna Creek High School | 15 |
| CARE - McCaffrey Middle | 20 |
| CARE - Mitchell Middle School | 20 |
| CARE - Riverview Middle School | 23 |
| CARE - Sutter Middle | 19 |
| CARE - Wilson C. Riles | 22 |
| Promise - Discovery High School | 28 |
| **Total** | **235** |

Figure 1.  Enrollment of 2016–17 Cohort by Grade Level
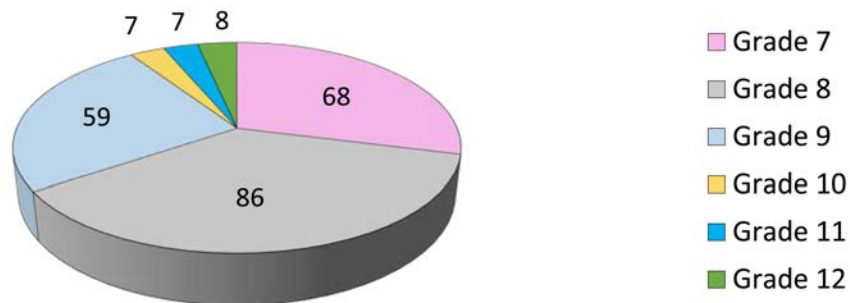


Figure 1 Data Table for Enrollment of 2016–17 Cohort by Grade Level

| Grade Level | Cohort Count of Students |
|---|---|
| Grade 7 | 68 |
| Grade 8 | 86 |
| Grade 9 | 59 |
| Grade 10 | 7 |
| Grade 11 | 7 |
| Grade 12 | 8 |

Figure 2.  Enrollment of 2016–17 Cohort by Ethnicity
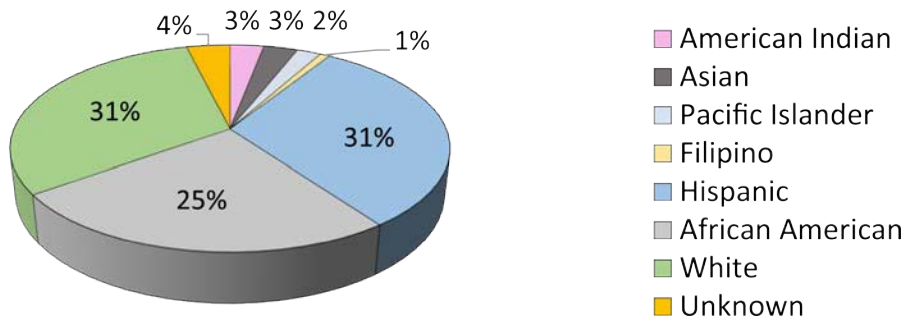


Figure 2 Data Table for Enrollment of 2016–17 Cohort by Ethnicity

| Primary Ethnicity | Percent |
|---|---|
| American Indian | 3% |
| Asian | 3% |
| Pacific Islander | 2% |
| Filipino | 1% |
| Hispanic | 31% |
| African American | 25% |
| White | 31% |
| Unknown | 4% |

In a review of the enrollment patterns of the 2016–17 cohort, great mobility was evident.  In the two years prior to their current enrollment at CARE and Promise programs, the students, on average, had enrolled in school four times and had attended three different schools across two different districts.  These averages also included extremes in enrollment patterns: 35 students had been enrolled at six or more different schools, and one student had enrolled a total of 19 times across 10 different schools and five school districts.  Of the 235 students in the 2016–17 cohort, 207 were still enrolled in a CARE or Promise program in January 2017.  In general, this snapshot of the 2016–17 cohort provides some insight into the challenges of the students served by these programs.

Analyses included all students identified in the 2016–17 cohort for which prior and current year data were obtained.  When students entered the programs from non-program districts without data sharing MOUs, prior year data could not be collected.  In addition, prior year data for one high school was not available. This resulted in 199 cohort students with data for both years.  A total of 17 students (8.5%) had also been enrolled in the CARE or Promise program in the 2015–16 year. A review of the demographics for students with prior year data (included in analyses) and those without prior year data (excluded from analyses) showed that the populations were sufficiently similar to substantiate meaningful comparisons.

## Results

Results are organized by measure within the report:

- Attendance
- Academic achievement
- Relationship between course grades and attendance
- CAASPP—Smarter Balanced Assessment results
- Behavioral outcomes
- Time in program
- Program perceptions—student, parent, and staff surveys

With the exception of the surveys, analyses presented utilized matched student records to ensure fair pre and post comparisons.

## Attendance

Analyses of attendance data showed that the rates varied across programs with some rates higher and some rates lower than in the prior year (Figure 3 and Table 3a). Changes in attendance rates are important to consider, not only because they represent the educational engagement of students, but also because program funding is derived from student attendance. Several points to consider when reviewing these attendance rates are that attendance generally decreases as grade levels increase, especially at the secondary level, and that the students in this cohort do not desire to attend school every day (see student survey results). Additionally, problems beyond school, can impact students' ability to attend school.

To determine whether students' attendance and chronic absenteeism rates improved from 2015–16 to 2016–17 while attending the programs, a matched samples *t*-test was performed for each measure. Tables 3a and 3b show that two program sites had statistically significant decreases in attendance rates and one program site had a statistically significant increase in the chronic absenteeism rate. Although some improvements may be seen in the chart and table, these were not statistically significant.

Figure 3.  2016–17 Cohort Attendance Rates by Year and Program Site
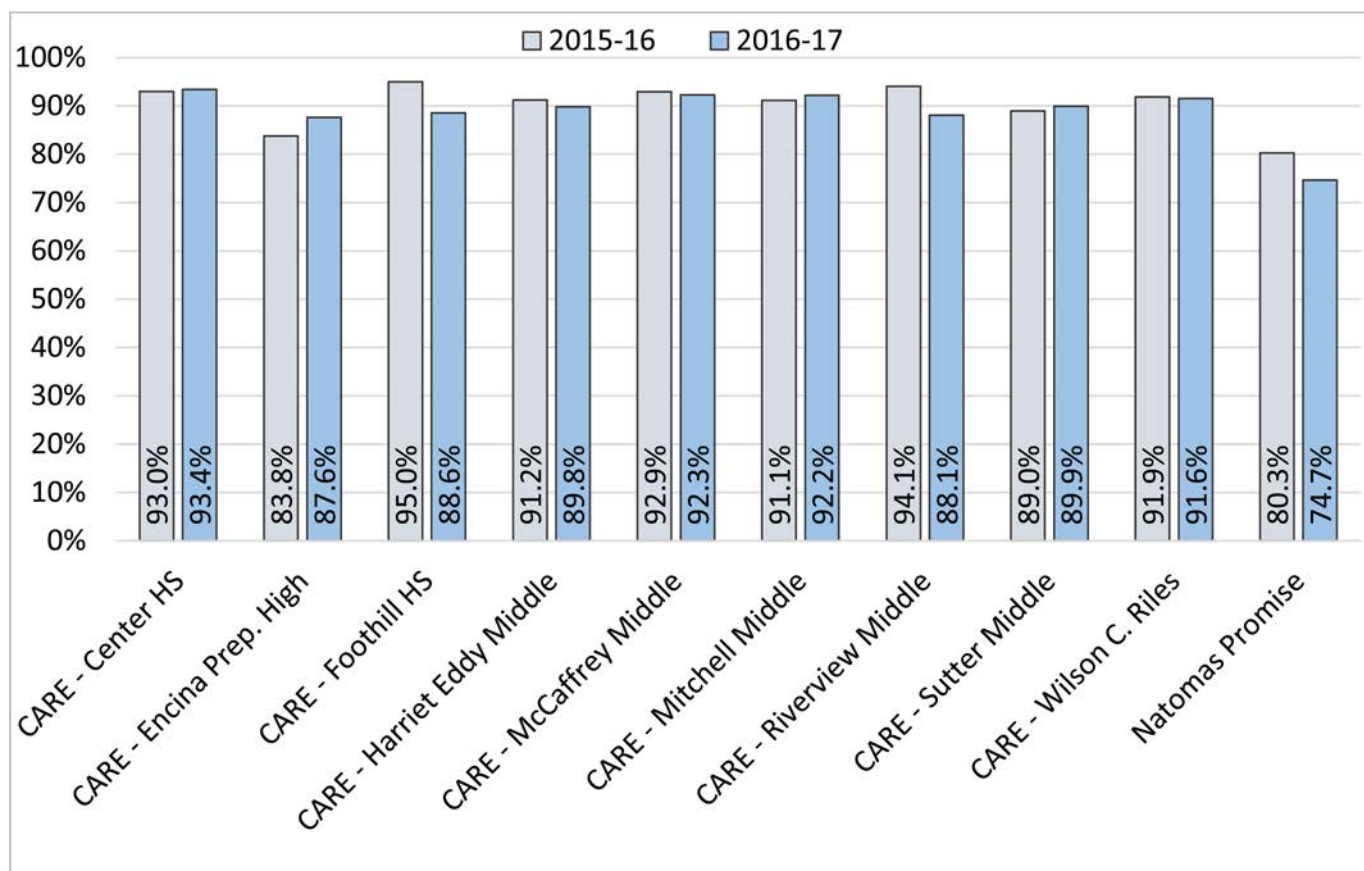


Table 3a. Matched Student Attendance Rates by Program Site

| Program Site* | Count of Matched Students | Attendance Rate 2015–16 | Attendance Rate 2016–17 | Attendance Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CARE - Center HS | 20 | 93.0% | 93.4% | 0.4% |
| CARE - Encina Preparatory HS | 19 | 83.8% | 87.6% | 3.8% |
| CARE - Foothill HS | 16 | 95.0% | 88.6% | -6.4% |
| CARE - Harriet Eddy Middle | 24 | 91.2% | 89.8% | -1.4% |
| CARE - McCaffrey Middle | 20 | 92.9% | 92.3% | -0.6% |
| CARE - Mitchell Middle School | 19 | 91.1% | 92.2% | 1.0% |
| CARE - Riverview Middle School | 21 | 94.1% | 88.1% | -6.0% |
| CARE - Sutter Middle | 16 | 89.0% | 89.9% | 1.0% |
| CARE - Wilson C. Riles | 19 | 91.9% | 91.6% | -0.3% |
| Natomas Promise | 24 | 80.3% | 74.7% | -5.6% |

\* 2015–16 Data could not be obtained for CARE - Laguna Creek High School

Shaded cells indicate a statistical difference at p = .05, as described in the narrative

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Table 3b. Matched Student Chronic Absence Rates by Program Site

| Program Site* | Count of Matched Students | Chronic Absence Rates 2015–16 | Chronic Absence Rates 2016–17 | Chronic Absence Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CARE - Center HS | 20 | 25.0% | 25.0% | 0.0% |
| CARE - Encina Preparatory HS | 19 | 73.7% | 47.4% | -26.3% |
| CARE - Foothill HS | 16 | 6.3% | 37.5% | 31.3% |
| CARE - Harriet Eddy Middle | 24 | 33.3% | 54.2% | 20.8% |
| CARE - McCaffrey Middle | 20 | 30.0% | 25.0% | -5.0% |
| CARE - Mitchell Middle School | 19 | 26.3% | 26.3% | 0.0% |
| CARE - Riverview Middle School | 21 | 19.0% | 52.4% | 33.3% |
| CARE - Sutter Middle | 16 | 37.5% | 31.3% | -6.2% |
| CARE - Wilson C. Riles | 19 | 15.8% | 26.3% | 10.5% |
| Natomas Promise | 24 | 70.8% | 70.8% | 0.0% |

\* 2015–16 Data could not be obtained for CARE - Laguna Creek High School

Shaded cells indicate a statistical difference at p = .05, as described in the narrative

As seen in the tables, the Foothill High School and Riverview Middle School CARE programs showed statistically significant decreases in attendance, $t(15) = 2.19$, $p = .045$, and, $t(20) = 3.70$, $p = .001$, respectively. The Riverview Middle School CARE program also showed a statistically significant increase in chronic absenteeism rates, $t(18) = 3.162$, $p = .005$. Secondary analyses of attendance and chronic absenteeism rates by grade level did not reveal any discernable patterns. Further analyses of rates by ethnicity showed no statistically significant differences between groups.

## Academic Achievement

Academic achievement was assessed through grades earned in core English, math, science, and history courses. Grade point assignments were set on a 5-point scale (A–F). Plus and minus grade notations were not given extra weight in calculations. This was conducted to equalize the prior year grading policies across districts and align with the current year grading policy where pluses and minus were not given extra weight. Courses in which pass/not pass grades were earned, or which were noted as incomplete, were excluded from the calculations.

To determine whether students' grades in courses improved while in the CARE and Promise programs, a matched samples $t$-test compared the prior year grade averages to the current program year grade averages by subject area. Overall program results showed that students' average grades significantly increased one full grade in all subject areas assessed, improving

from a D grade on average, to a C grade on average (Table 4). Figures 4 through 7 illustrate the changes in grade averages by program site[1] (stars indicate statistically significant increases at the $p$ =.05 level).

Table 4. Changes in Matched Student Grades Earned by Subject Area

| Average Grade by Subject | N | 2015–16 GPA | 2016–17 GPA | Std. Deviation | t | df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| English | 189 | 1.30 | 2.35 | 1.130 | 12.83 | 188 | .000 |
| Math | 186 | 0.96 | 1.98 | 1.244 | 11.22 | 185 | .000 |
| Science | 135 | 1.34 | 2.27 | 1.176 | 9.15 | 134 | .000 |
| History | 146 | 1.20 | 2.31 | 1.288 | 10.41 | 145 | .000 |

Figure 4.  Changes in Average Grades Earned in English by Program Site for Matched Students



Stars indicate statistically significant increases at the p =.05 level

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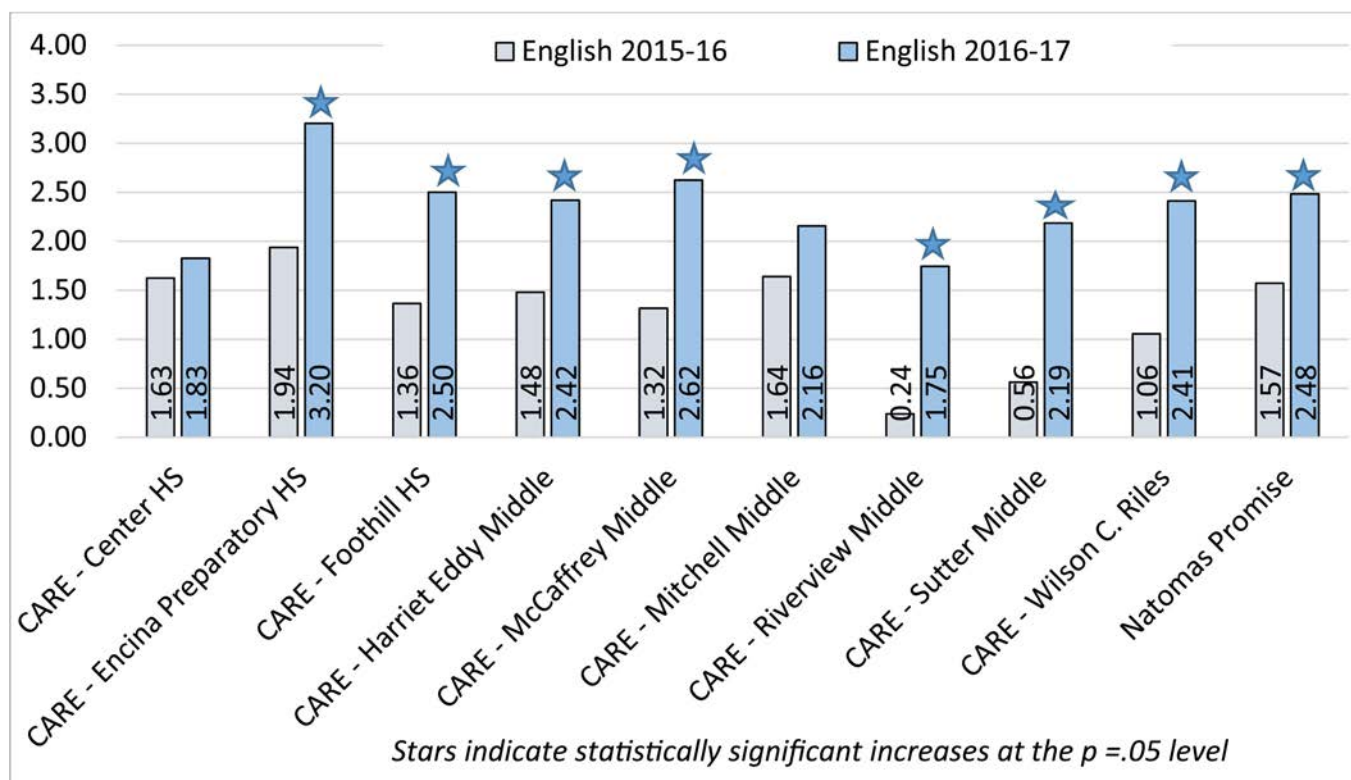
[1] Analyses for the Laguna Creek High School CARE program were not included due to lack of prior year comparison data.

Figure 4 Data Table for Changes in Average Grades (GPA) Earned in English by Program Site for Matched Students

| School Name | English 15–16 GPA | English 16–17 GPA |
|---|---|---|
| CARE - Center HS | 1.63 | 1.83 |
| CARE - Encina Preparatory HS | 1.94 | 3.20 |
| CARE - Foothill HS | 1.36 | 2.50 |
| CARE - Harriet Eddy Middle | 1.48 | 2.42 |
| CARE - McCaffrey Middle | 1.32 | 2.62 |
| CARE - Mitchell Middle | 1.64 | 2.16 |
| CARE - Riverview Middle | 0.24 | 1.75 |
| CARE - Sutter Middle | 0.56 | 2.19 |
| CARE - Wilson C. Riles | 1.06 | 2.41 |
| Natomas Promise | 1.57 | 2.48 |

Figure 5.  Changes in Average Grades Earned in Math by Program Site for Matched Students
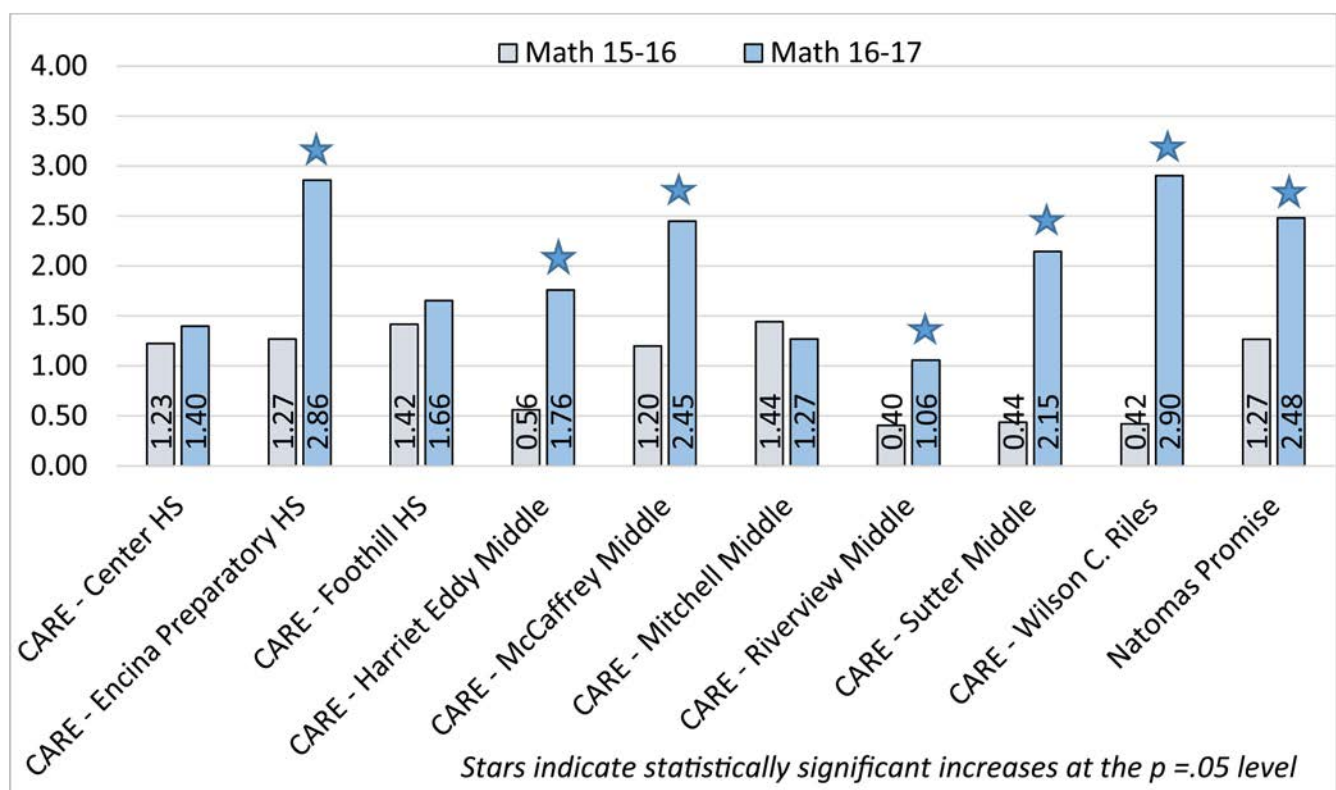
Figure 5 Data Table for Changes in Average Grades (GPA) Earned in Math by Program Site for Matched Students

| School Name | Math 15–16 GPA | Math 16–17 GPA |
|---|---|---|
| CARE - Center HS | 1.23 | 1.40 |
| CARE - Encina Preparatory HS | 1.27 | 2.86 |
| CARE - Foothill HS | 1.42 | 1.66 |
| CARE - Harriet Eddy Middle | 0.56 | 1.76 |
| CARE - McCaffrey Middle | 1.20 | 2.45 |
| CARE - Mitchell Middle | 1.44 | 1.27 |
| CARE - Riverview Middle | 0.40 | 1.06 |
| CARE - Sutter Middle | 0.44 | 2.15 |
| CARE - Wilson C. Riles | 0.42 | 2.90 |
| Natomas Promise | 1.27 | 2.48 |

Figure 6. Changes in Average Grades Earned in Science by Program Site for Matched Students



Stars indicate statistically significant increases at the p =.05 level
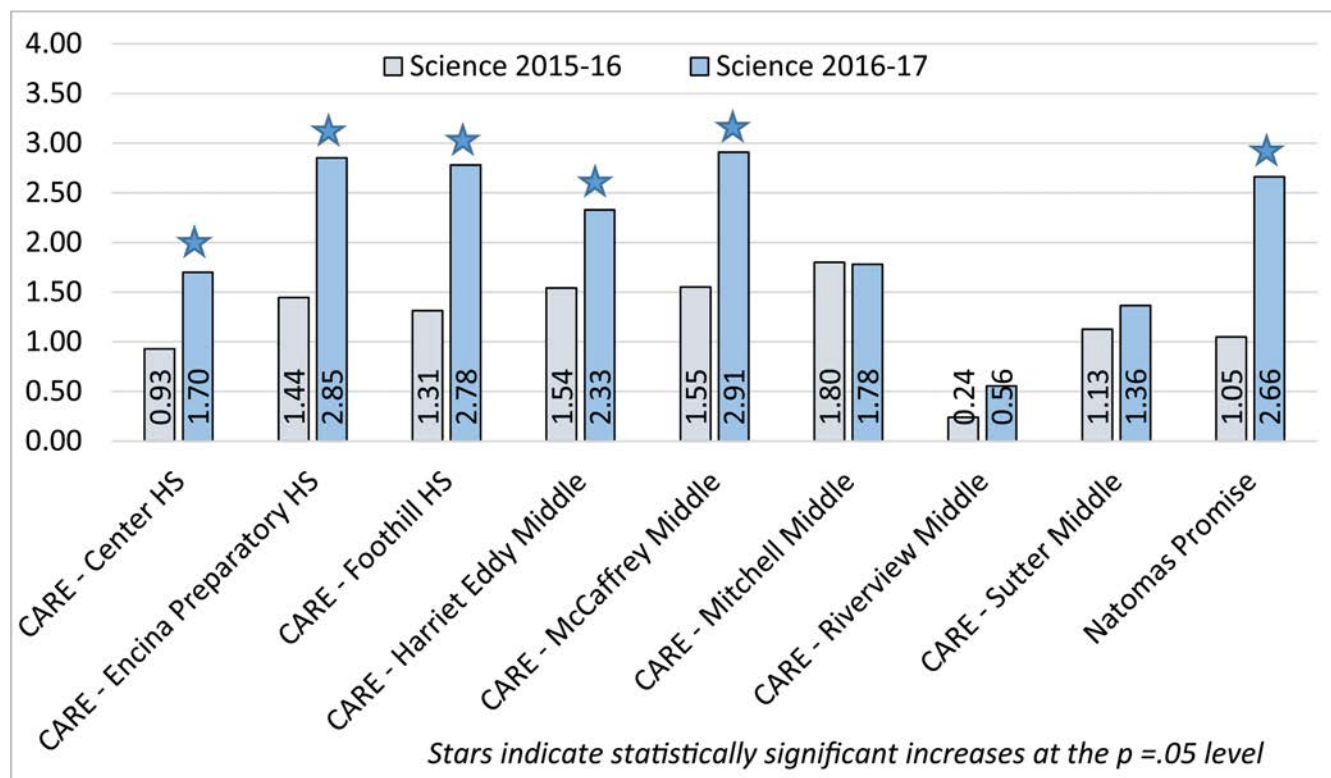
Figure 6 Data Table for Changes in Average Grades (GPA) Earned in Science by Program Site for Matched Students

| School Name | Science 15–16 GPA | Science 16–17 GPA |
|---|---|---|
| CARE - Center HS | 0.93 | 1.70 |
| CARE - Encina Preparatory HS | 1.44 | 2.85 |
| CARE - Foothill HS | 1.31 | 2.78 |
| CARE - Harriet Eddy Middle | 1.54 | 2.33 |
| CARE - McCaffrey Middle | 1.55 | 2.91 |
| CARE - Mitchell Middle | 1.80 | 1.78 |
| CARE - Riverview Middle | 0.24 | 0.56 |
| CARE - Sutter Middle | 1.13 | 1.36 |
| Natomas Promise | 1.05 | 2.66 |

Figure 7. Changes in Average Grades Earned in History by Program Site for Matched Students



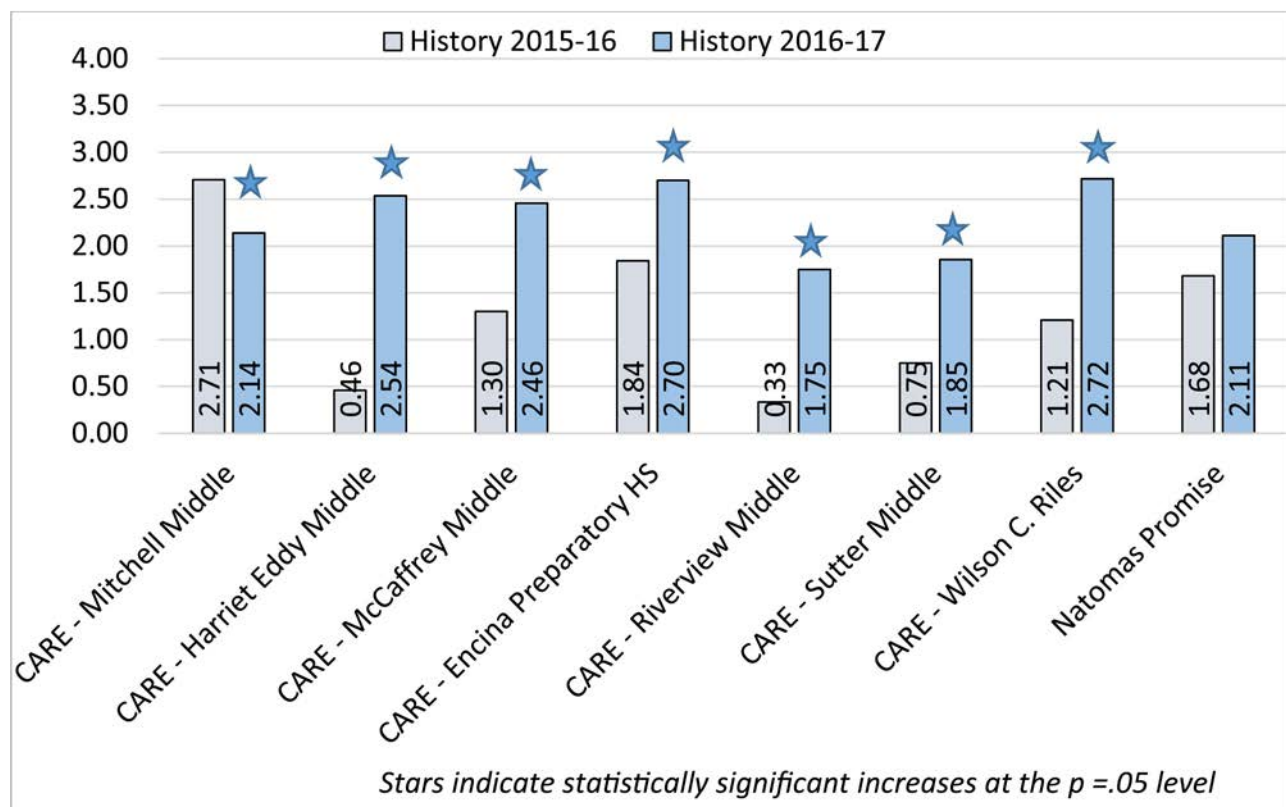Stars indicate statistically significant increases at the p =.05 level

Figure 7 Data Table for Changes in Average Grades (GPA) Earned in History by Program Site for Matched Students

| School Name | History 15–16 GPA | History 16–17 GPA |
|---|---|---|
| CARE - Mitchell Middle | 2.71 | 2.14 |
| CARE - Harriet Eddy Middle | 0.46 | 2.54 |
| CARE - McCaffrey Middle | 1.30 | 2.46 |
| CARE - Encina Preparatory HS | 1.84 | 2.70 |
| CARE - Riverview Middle | 0.33 | 1.75 |
| CARE - Sutter Middle | 0.75 | 1.85 |
| CARE - Wilson C. Riles | 1.21 | 2.72 |
| Natomas Promise | 1.68 | 2.11 |

It is evident from Figures 4 through 7 and the accompanying data tables that students showed impressive gains in English and math achievement at nearly every program site, even at sites where student attendance rates declined.

**Relationship between Course Grades and Attendance**

To learn more about the relationship between school attendance and achievement, correlation analyses were conducted for course grades and attendance, for both the current and the prior year.  Analyses showed small, but statistically significant correlations between students' English, math, and history grade averages and attendance for 2016–17 (Table 5).  Small, negative relationships were found between English, math, and history grade averages and chronic absenteeism rates for 2016–17.  In other words, as attendance increased and rates of chronic absenteeism dropped, grades increased.  No correlations between English, math, science, or history grade averages and attendance and chronic absenteeism were found for the prior year (2015–16).

Although not shown in the table, grades among all of the subject areas (English, math, science, and history) were moderately correlated with one another, ranging from .630 to .660, meaning that increases in course grades were not limited to one subject area, but rather were seen across multiple subject areas.  Overall for 2016–17, grade improvement and attendance improvement were positively related to one another.

Table 5. Correlations between English and Math Grades and Attendance for 2016–17

| Correlation Analyses | 2016–17 Attendance Rate | 2016–17 Chronic Absence Rate |
|---|---|---|
| Average English Grades 2016–17 Pearson Correlation | .285** | -.248** |
| Average English Grades 2016–17 Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .001 |
| Average English Grades 2016–17 N | 193 | 193 |
| Average Math Grades 2016–17 Pearson Correlation | .215** | -.204** |
| Average Math Grades 2016–17 Sig. (2-tailed) | .003 | .005 |
| Average Math Grades 2016–17 N | 189 | 189 |
| Average Science Grades 2016–17 Pearson Correlation | 0.116 | -0.127 |
| Average Science Grades 2016–17 Sig. (2-tailed) | .159 | .121 |
| Average Science Grades 2016–17 N | 149 | 149 |
| Average History Grades 2016–17 Pearson Correlation | .187* | -.212** |
| Average History Grades 2016–17 Sig. (2-tailed) | .022 | .009 |
| Average History Grades 2016–17 N | 149 | 149 |

** Correlation is significant at the p = 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the p = 0.05 level (2-tailed).

To assess the relationship between school enrollment frequency and other outcomes (grades, suspension rates, attendance and chronic absenteeism), additional correlational analyses were conducted. Although it might be expected that switching schools numerous times would generate academic and behavioral issues, the results of the correlational analyses could not support this theory. For the variables above, no meaningful relationships were found for either the 2015–16 year or the 2016–17 year.

### CAASPP - Smarter Balanced Results
As an additional, independent measure of academic progress, the CAASPP - Smarter Balanced assessment results were analyzed to assess academic progress in overall achievement level from 2015–16 to 2016–17. This test is administered to students in grade 3 through 8 and 11; therefore, not all participants will have scores for both years. The achievement levels that students can earn on these assessments are standards not met (1), standards nearly met (2), standards met (3), and standards exceeded (4). Results from matched samples *t*-tests showed no difference in English language arts/literacy achievement levels from 2015–16 (mean 1.51) and 2016–17 (mean 1.48) and statistically significant, but slightly lower performance in math from 2015–16 (mean 1.33) and 2016–17 (mean 1.21), $t(15) = 2.187$, $p = .045$, and, $t(93) = 2.60$, $p = .011$. Whether this difference in math levels is meaningful is unknown at the time of this report as comparative statewide performance data is not available yet.

## Behavioral Outcomes

Behavioral outcomes for students were measured through analyses of suspension and expulsion rates. Analyses of suspensions rates showed a statistically significant decline in the numbers of students (matched) who were suspended in 2015–16 as compared to 2016–17, $t(198) = 2.015$, $p = .045$.  In 2015–16, 28% of students had been suspended one or more times, whereas in 2016–17, 20% of students had been suspended one or more times.  This resulted in 16 fewer students receiving suspensions while enrolled in the program.

Analyses of expulsion data was more complex both due to the small numbers of students expelled and policy regulations. In 2015–16, three cohort students had been expelled and none had been expelled in 2016–17.  By regulation, the Sacramento County Office of Education may not expel students from its programs and therefore analyses were not possible for the current year.  For follow-up cohort evaluations, the 2016–17 cohort students will be tracked through the 2017–18 year.  Program exiters will be monitored for subsequent expulsion from school and rates will be analyzed at that time.

## Time in Program

As noted prior, 17 students had been enrolled in a CARE or Promise program in the prior year (2015–16).  Preliminary analyses suggested that academics improved more for students enrolled for the first time in 2016–17 than those that also been enrolled in the program in the prior year. In theory, the second year program students would have already made the academic increase in the prior year, and would therefore, not show a substantial increase in their second program year. Due to the small numbers of students who had been in the program for both years, however, these claims could not be substantiated.

## Program Perceptions

To learn more about the impact of the CARE and Promise programs, surveys were administered in spring 2017 to program students, parents, and staff.  Survey items are described in the report and representative responses to open ended questions are provided.  Results for the surveys are presented separately for each group.

## Student Perceptions

The results for the student survey represented 164 students from 11 program sites.  Figure 8 shows the distribution of student respondents across grade levels.  Nearly 20% of students indicated that they had been in the program the year before.

Figure 8.  Student Survey Participants by Grade Level
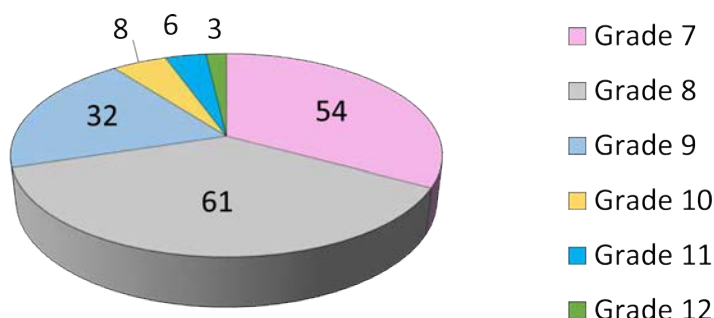


Figure 8 Data Table for Student Survey Participants by Grade Level

| Grade Level | Student Survey Counts |
|---|---|
| Grade 7 | 54 |
| Grade 8 | 61 |
| Grade 9 | 32 |
| Grade 10 | 8 |
| Grade 11 | 6 |
| Grade 12 | 3 |

The survey instructed students to indicate their level of agreement to 10 items about the program using a 4-point scale where a score of 4 corresponded to "strongly agree", a score of 3 to "agree", a score of 2 to "disagree", and a score of 1 to "strongly disagree".

Survey results showed that the CARE and Promise teachers provided a positive educational experience for students (Figure 9).  Nearly all students agreed, or strongly agreed, that teachers wanted them to do their best in school and supported students by making time to talk with them about their grades and schoolwork. It was evident that teachers provided a safe learning environment and held students to realistic academic expectations. Students felt that they were treated with respect, and that the teachers cared about students and listened to their concerns. Interestingly, even with the positive feedback provided about the program and teachers, students' general attitude about school (39% do not like to go each day) and how some of the students treat each other (40% indicated that students are not respectful to one another) were much lower and could direct areas for future improvement.

Figure 9. Students' Opinions about the CARE and Promise Programs



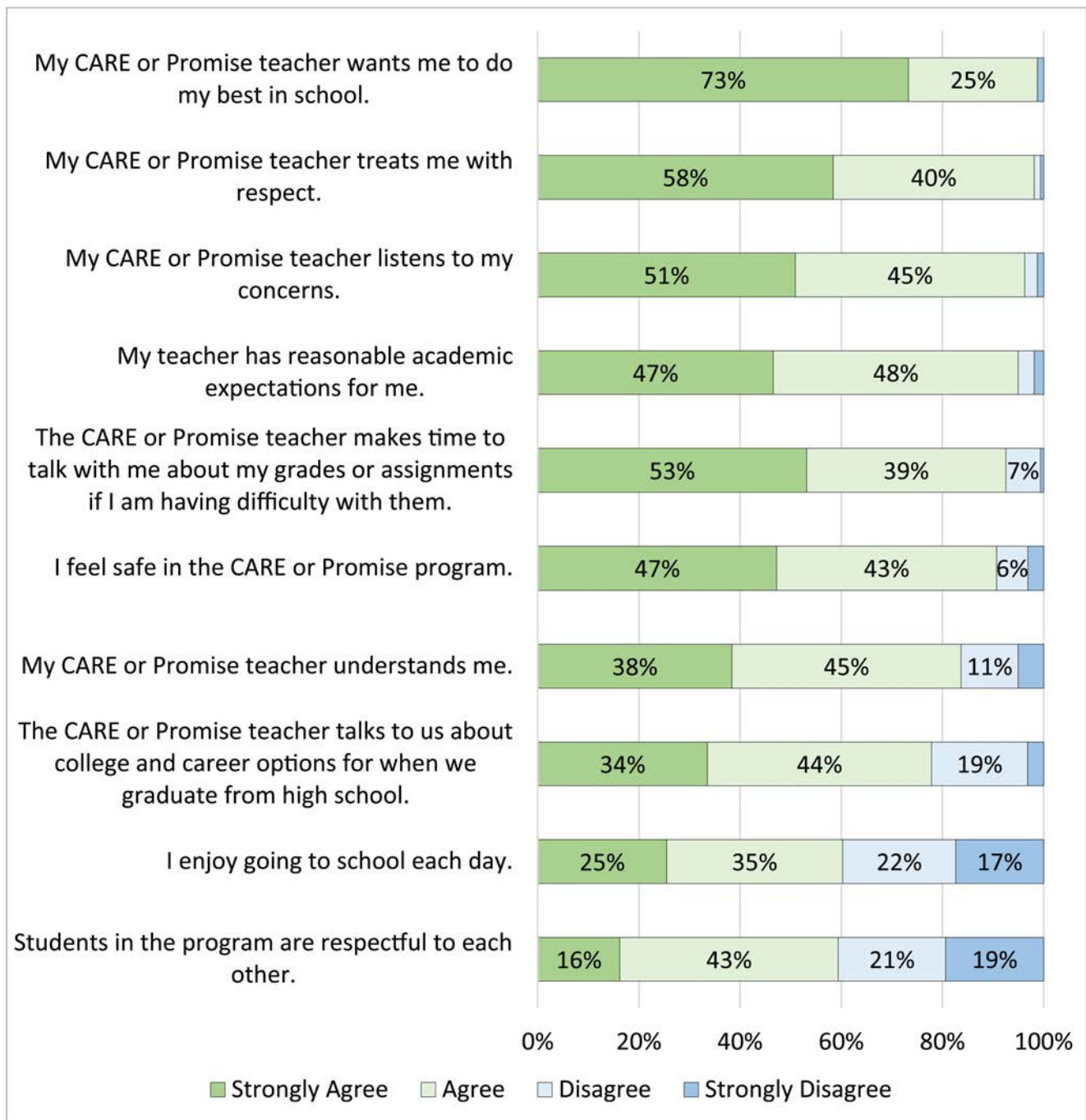| Statement | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| My CARE or Promise teacher wants me to do my best in school. | 73% | 25% | | |
| My CARE or Promise teacher treats me with respect. | 58% | 40% | | |
| My CARE or Promise teacher listens to my concerns. | 51% | 45% | | |
| My teacher has reasonable academic expectations for me. | 47% | 48% | | |
| The CARE or Promise teacher makes time to talk with me about my grades or assignments if I am having difficulty with them. | 53% | 39% | 7% | |
| I feel safe in the CARE or Promise program. | 47% | 43% | 6% | |
| My CARE or Promise teacher understands me. | 38% | 45% | 11% | |
| The CARE or Promise teacher talks to us about college and career options for when we graduate from high school. | 34% | 44% | 19% | |
| I enjoy going to school each day. | 25% | 35% | 22% | 17% |
| Students in the program are respectful to each other. | 16% | 43% | 21% | 19% |

Figure 9 Data Table for Students' Opinions about the CARE and Promise Programs

| Question Stem Student Survey | Percent Strongly Agree | Percent Agree | Percent Disagree | Percent Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| My CARE or Promise teacher wants me to do my best in school. | 73% | 25% | 0% | 1% |
| My CARE or Promise teacher treats me with respect. | 58% | 40% | 1% | 1% |
| My CARE or Promise teacher listens to my concerns. | 51% | 45% | 2% | 1% |
| My teacher has reasonable academic expectations for me. | 47% | 48% | 3% | 2% |
| The CARE or Promise teacher makes time to talk with me about my grades or assignments if I am having difficulty with them. | 53% | 39% | 7% | 1% |
| I feel safe in the CARE or Promise program. | 47% | 43% | 6% | 3% |
| My CARE or Promise teacher understands me. | 38% | 45% | 11% | 5% |
| The CARE or Promise teacher talks to us about college and career options for when we graduate from high school. | 34% | 44% | 19% | 3% |
| I enjoy going to school each day. | 25% | 35% | 22% | 17% |
| Students in the program are respectful to each other. | 16% | 43% | 21% | 19% |

The survey also asked students to reflect on their own experiences with the program across a variety of areas, and asked how they may have changed since the prior year as a result of the program. Students could compare their experiences this year, to their experience last year using a 5-point rating scale. The scale points were: 5 for "definite improvement"; 4 for "some improvement"; 3 for "about the same"; 2 for "a little worse"; and 1 for "a lot worse". A "not applicable" choice was also provided. Figure 10 shows the outcomes of the students' reflections. Results showed that in each area assessed, more than half of the students identified positive changes in themselves since being in the program. The most prominent differences that students noted were how much they value their education (80% indicated improvement), completing school work on time (79% indicated improvement), and wanting to do a good job on assignments (79% indicated improvement). Seventy percent of students also agreed that their relationships with their teachers had improved as well.

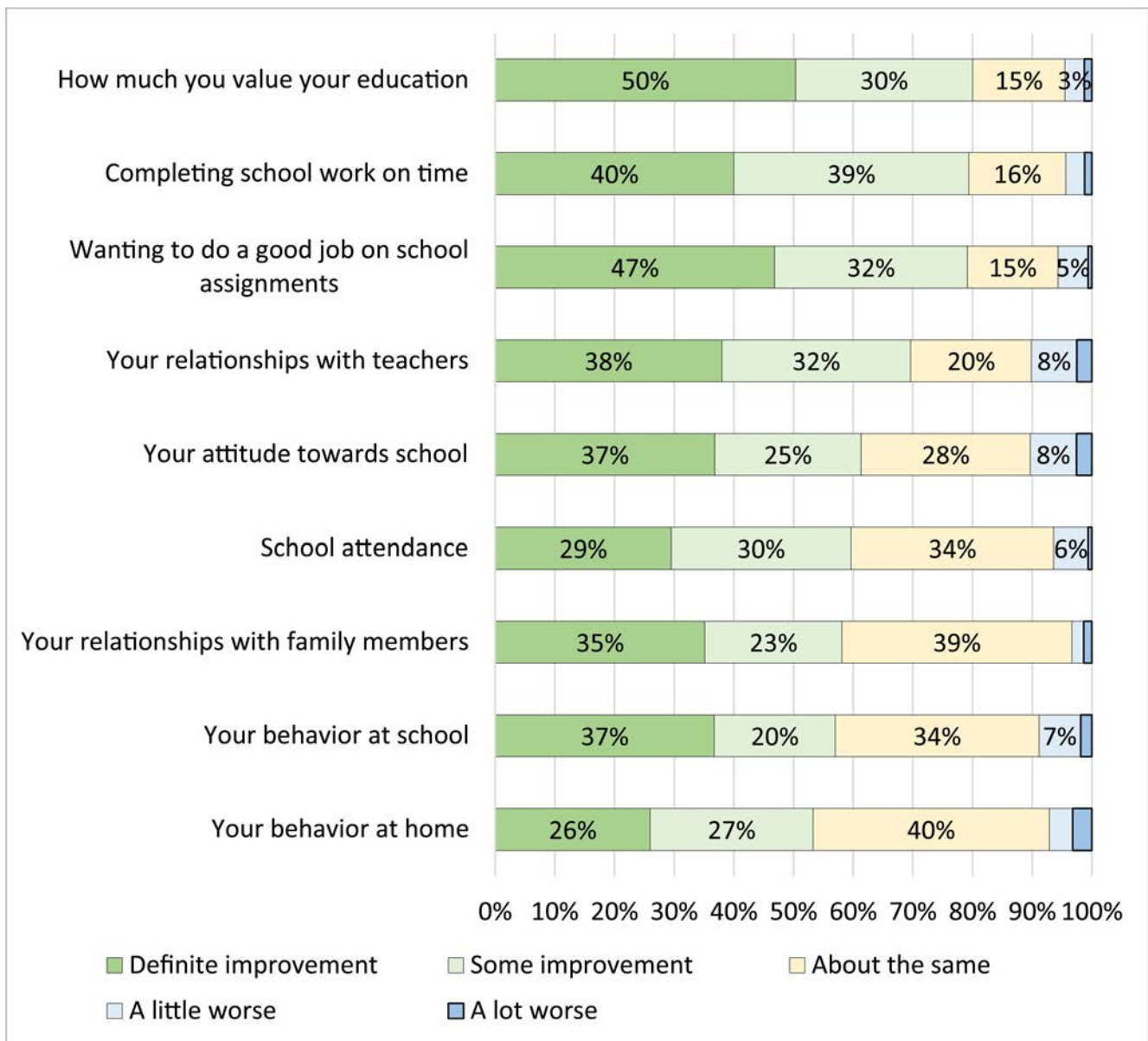Figure 10.  Student Reflection of Changes since 2015–16

Figure 10 Data Table for Student Reflection of Changes since 2015–16

| Question Stem Student Survey | Percent Definite Improvement | Percent Some Improvement | Percent About the Same | Percent a little Worse | Percent a Lot Worse |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How much you value your education | 50% | 30% | 15% | 3% | 1% |
| Completing school work on time | 40% | 39% | 16% | 3% | 1% |
| Wanting to do a good job on school assignments | 47% | 32% | 15% | 5% | 1% |
| Your relationships with teachers | 38% | 32% | 20% | 8% | 3% |
| Your attitude towards school | 37% | 25% | 28% | 8% | 3% |
| School attendance | 29% | 30% | 34% | 6% | 1% |
| Your relationships with family members | 35% | 23% | 39% | 2% | 1% |
| Your behavior at school | 37% | 20% | 34% | 7% | 2% |
| Your behavior at home | 26% | 27% | 40% | 4% | 3% |

Given that student engagement in school-based activities is one of the state's priorities for schools, the percentage of students who participated in activities within these programs is impressive.  These were students who had been disengaging with school in the prior year and were now re-engaging in their education, the school, and their community. This data serves as one more piece of evidence about the success of the programs.

Table 6.  Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities

| Extracurricular Activities During 2016–17 | Count | Percent of All Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Participated in one or more extra-curricular activity | 113 | 69% |
| Athletics or sports teams | 62 | 38% |
| School clubs | 29 | 18% |
| Visual or performing arts programs | 23 | 14% |
| Technology programs (e.g. robotics, VEX, etc.) | 16 | 10% |
| Yearbook | 12 | 7% |
| Church programs | 11 | 7% |
| Community service or volunteer | 10 | 6% |
| History programs (e.g. history day, history reenactments, etc.) | 9 | 5% |
| Youth group | 9 | 5% |
| Science programs (e.g. science fair, etc.) | 8 | 5% |
| Unpaid work experience | 8 | 5% |
| Paid employment | 7 | 4% |
| Leadership or student council | 5 | 3% |
| Academic enrichment programs (e.g. academic decathlon, etc.) | 3 | 2% |
| Other | 20 | 12% |

The survey also provided opportunities for students to elaborate on their program experiences within the context of three open-ended questions.  Samples of student responses[2] are provided with the question stems below.

**Has the CARE or Promise Program benefitted you?**
- Ever since I joined I have been getting better test grades on test, and been turning in more assignments.
- The CARE program has benefited me by having a teacher that can help me with any of the main core subjects.
- The program has done a lot for me, because at my old school I was very distracted and getting into a lot of trouble. Then when I came here, I was more on task with my work and was working on my behavior.
- The Promise program has benefited me for sure because of the flexibility of time when going, and the pace you able to go with your work.

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[2] Minimal punctuation and grammar edits were applied to responses to improve readability.

- The PROMISE Program has made definite improvements for me. I've gained a better perspective of future goals and opportunities. My teacher keeps my attitude and positivity up, and makes my learning experience very fun.
- Yes because, when I came into this CARE teachers room I had the world's worst attitude now I'm like the happiest girl in the world.
- Yes it has, I do all my homework now. Last year I didn't do any of my homework, but now that I'm in high school, and Mr. Marquez has taught us how important it is to graduate. And I look at school differently now.
- Yes the CARE program has helped me because I have been helped to learn how to get over the daily bumps in the road. Also I have been able to have more time to understand the concept of each lesson.
- Yes, because my grades have gotten way better since last year.
- Yes, my grades are definitely better than my grades before the CARE program. I'd say that because of the CARE program my cumulative GPA has improved, therefore increasing my chances of graduating, being able to walk the stage, and get into programs such as AVID in high school.
- Yes, the care program has benefited me. This makes my task focus much better & allows me chances to realize the importance of turning items in on time.
- Yes, I understand the subjects more.
- Yes, it has. My teacher has been one of the best ones I've ever had
- Yes, it has. It has got me caught up to other kids thinking level it basically put me back on track with everyone else this was a great experience for me
- Yes because I never knew how to divide until I started

**Has the CARE or Promise Program benefitted your parents or guardians?**
- For sure, my parents are pleased and glad with the program. They know now that they don't have to worry about me or my grades as much as they used to a couple of years ago.
- I feel like it has to see me doing a little better in school.
- I think cause my behavior has changed as well as my attitude ☺
- It has because I'm coming home understanding more, so I don't have to always ask them for help every second.
- About the same because it doesn't really affect my parents.
- It has for both parents, but mainly my dad has been able to see a lot of improvement since I got into the program. My mom was the one that wanted me in here so I could learn and understand things better and she noticed a small bit of change in my attitude and learning skills since being in the program.
- It really hasn't benefited her, just me.
- No, because I still act the same way towards school.

- The program helped my parents because they don't worry as much because I'm doing much better and I'm not getting into trouble.
- Yes because it gives my parents time to do other own things instead of helping me to do my homework.
- Yes because my mom does not have to stress about my grades anymore.
- Yes, because I wouldn't be asking them for help with something because they don't know it either, so I ask my questions at school.
- Yes, the teacher always calls home, lets my parents know about my grades and behaviors.
- Yes. The teacher is a good listener and helpful with my work, my mom appreciates that.
- It has helped my parents because they have more of a reason to believe that I could do it.
- Yes because now I am smarter than last year.
- Yes because they have worry less about me getting in fights.
- Yes it put more confidence in them for me to catch up with other kids and it worked.
- Yes they have they checked my grades more often and have been happy with them.

**Comments or ideas to improve the program:**
- Can you guys make the CARE program for 10th, 11th, 12th grade as well PLEASEEEEEE!!!!!!!!
- Have a more strict teacher.
- Have field trips, so we can get away from school to give your brain a break.
- I would say to open this class to more students. I've seen this class with few students and many who have been rejected the opportunity. This class is great, and I feel more students should get this second chance.
- Just be respectful to the kids and treat them like your own kids.
- Just make sure you know what's going on with your students. Know that they feel safe in the class and that you have their back, because no matter where you go, you'll always run into something that isn't exactly "good" and be overwhelmed with it.
- Make the students more involved. Make them really want to come to school every day, and teach them more about life and the things you will have to go through as an adult.
- Move on the lessons a bit quicker.
- The Program is just fine by me. but I would like to have time to make the kids get along if they have a bad time in their classes
- Actually, I think this care program is perfect the way it is I mean having a bunch of kids that don't behave in one class isn't the best idea, but the teacher is really changing their attitude.
- Honestly, I really don't know, maybe put more discipline on people who need it.
- Improve punishments for students.

Lastly, when students were asked if they would recommend the CARE or Promise program to other students or families, 77% indicated they would recommend the program to others and 14% weren't sure.  When asked why they might not recommend the program, a number of them indicated that they would only recommend it if the student was a good fit for the program.

## Parent Perceptions

A total of 40 parents from among seven program sites responded to the parent survey for a response rate of 19% (for students active at the time the survey was administered).  Of the parents surveyed, 30% indicated that their child had been enrolled in the program the prior year. Questions in the parent survey mirrored those in the student survey and included some additional items specific to parents.

As with the student survey, the parent survey asked about their opinions of the program using the aforementioned 4-point scale, but with the inclusion of a "not applicable" response option. Analyses showed that parent perceptions about the program were very positive across all areas and that nearly all (97%) were satisfied with the program their child attended (Figure 11).  They rated the teachers as responsive and helpful and the program as safe. All parents believed that their children were motivated by the classroom assignments, and 89% believed that their children enjoyed going to school each day.  Areas in which 10 more percent of parents disagreed to survey items were further analyzed by program site.  Analyses showed that the parents who disagreed about the school being clean or that their child did not like to go to school every day pertained only to two program sites.

Figure 11.  Parents' Opinions about the CARE and Promise Programs



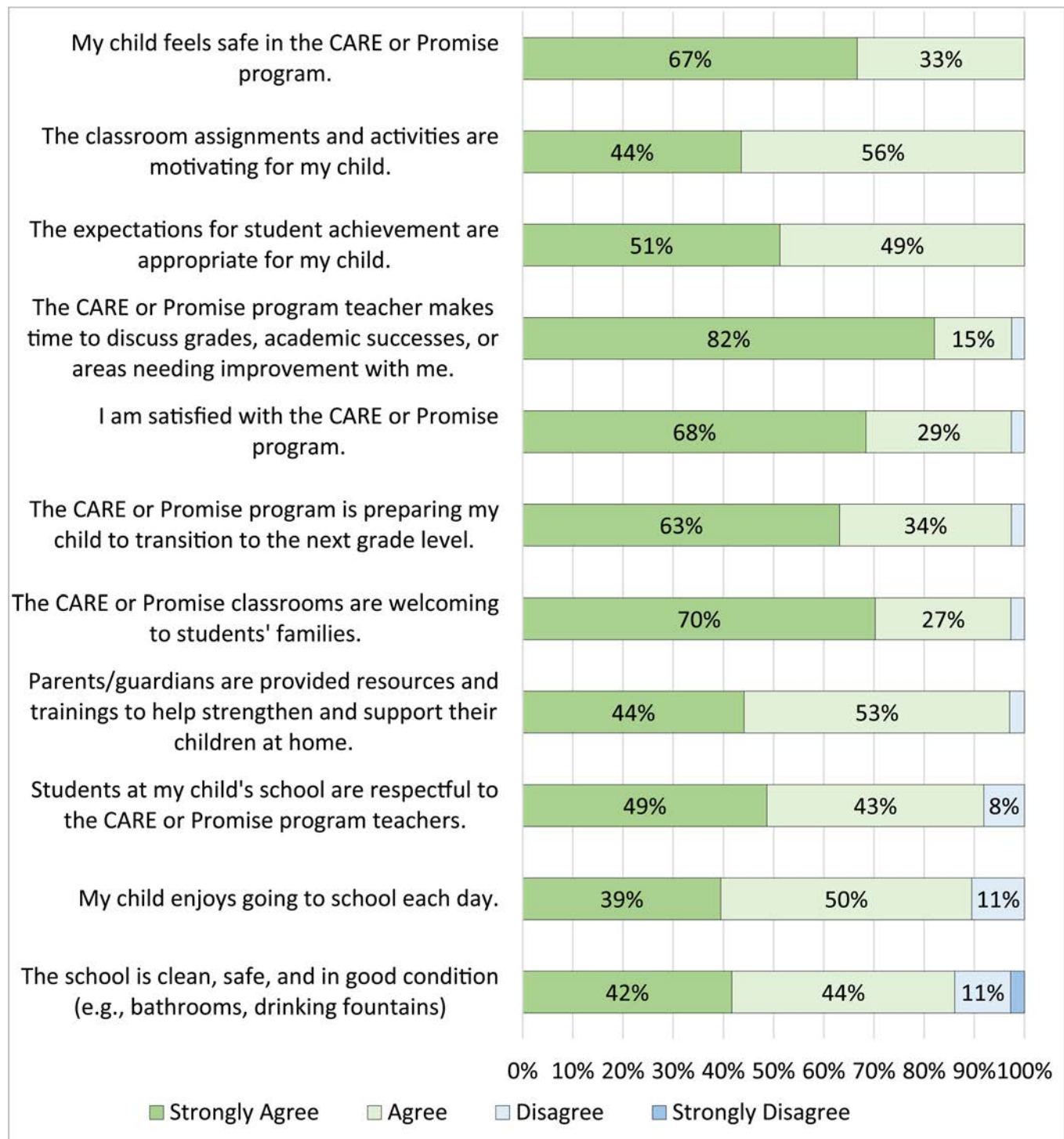| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| My child feels safe in the CARE or Promise program. | 67% | 33% | | |
| The classroom assignments and activities are motivating for my child. | 44% | 56% | | |
| The expectations for student achievement are appropriate for my child. | 51% | 49% | | |
| The CARE or Promise program teacher makes time to discuss grades, academic successes, or areas needing improvement with me. | 82% | 15% | | |
| I am satisfied with the CARE or Promise program. | 68% | 29% | | |
| The CARE or Promise program is preparing my child to transition to the next grade level. | 63% | 34% | | |
| The CARE or Promise classrooms are welcoming to students' families. | 70% | 27% | | |
| Parents/guardians are provided resources and trainings to help strengthen and support their children at home. | 44% | 53% | | |
| Students at my child's school are respectful to the CARE or Promise program teachers. | 49% | 43% | 8% | |
| My child enjoys going to school each day. | 39% | 50% | 11% | |
| The school is clean, safe, and in good condition (e.g., bathrooms, drinking fountains) | 42% | 44% | 11% | |

Figure 11 Data Table for Parents' Opinions about the CARE and Promise Programs

| Question Stem Parent Survey | Percent Strongly Agree | Percent Agree | Percent Disagree | Percent Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The expectations for student achievement are appropriate for my child. | 51% | 49% | 0% | 0% |
| The classroom assignments and activities are motivating for my child. | 44% | 56% | 0% | 0% |
| My child feels safe in the CARE or Promise program. | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% |
| The CARE or Promise program teacher makes time to discuss grades, academic successes, or areas needing improvement with me. | 82% | 15% | 3% | 0% |
| I am satisfied with the CARE or Promise program. | 68% | 29% | 3% | 0% |
| The CARE or Promise program is preparing my child to transition to the next grade level. | 63% | 34% | 3% | 0% |
| The CARE or Promise classrooms are welcoming to students' families. | 70% | 27% | 3% | 0% |
| Parents/guardians are provided resources and trainings to help strengthen and support their children at home. | 44% | 53% | 3% | 0% |
| Students at my child's school are respectful to the CARE or Promise program teachers. | 49% | 43% | 8% | 0% |
| My child enjoys going to school each day. | 39% | 50% | 11% | 0% |
| The school is clean, safe, and in good condition (e.g., bathrooms, drinking fountains) | 42% | 44% | 11% | 3% |

In addition to assessing parents' opinions about the program, the survey also asked parents to reflect on their child's experience with the program and rate changes in their child's behavior before and after enrollment in the program. Ratings utilized the same 5-point scale for the comparable items on the student survey. Figure 12 shows the ratings provided by parents for each area. Parents noted that the greatest improvements were their child's completion of school work on time and their child wanting to do a good job on school assignments. Parents believed that their child valued education more and had better relationships with teachers. Results showed that parents, on average, reported more positive changes in students than the students reported, with the exception of valuing his or her education, which was the same for both groups. Parents whose children were new to the program in the 2016–17 year provided similar ratings to parents whose children were in the program for a second year.

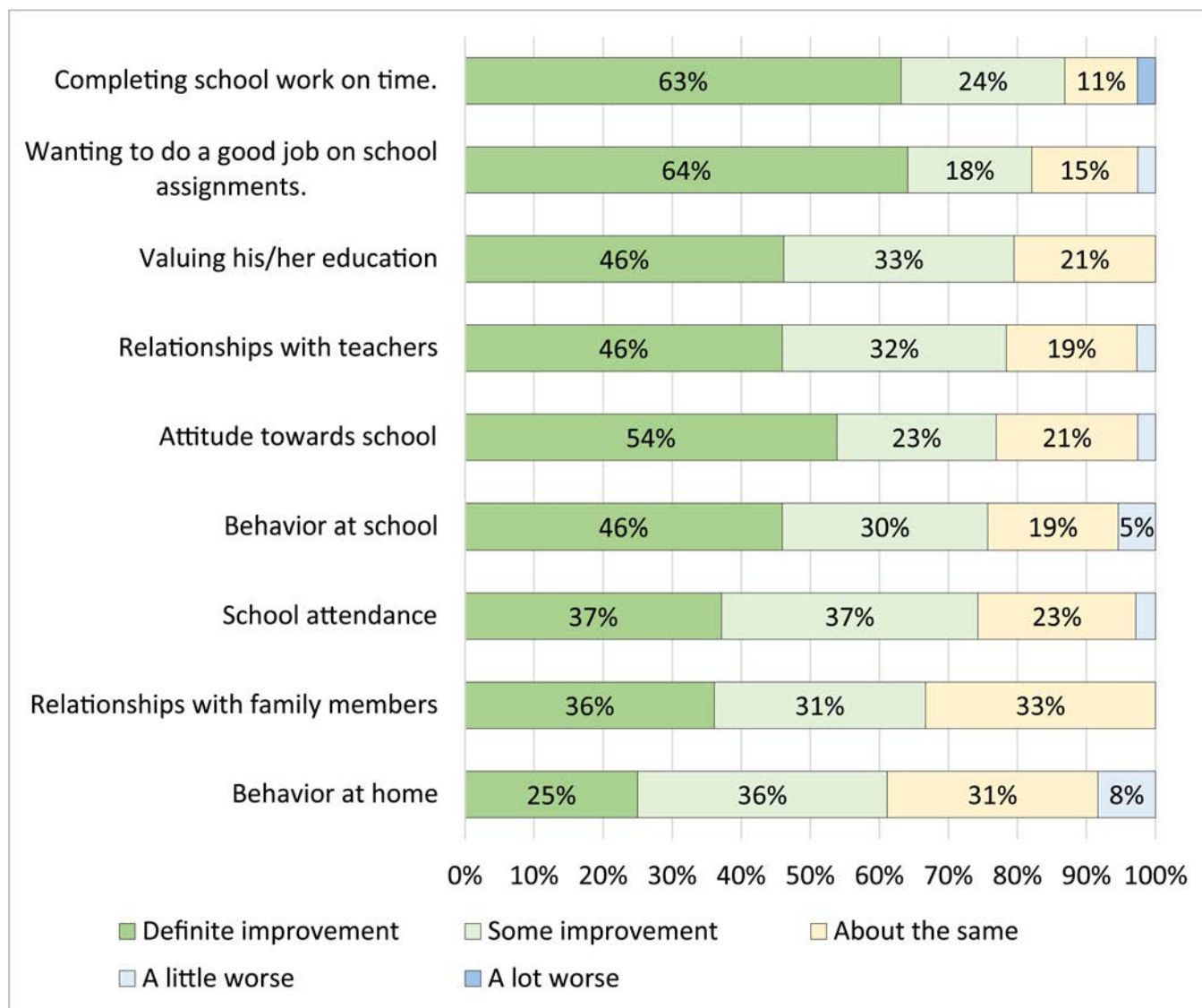Figure 12.  Parents' Reflection of Changes in Students since 2015–16



Completing school work on time. — Definite improvement 63%, Some improvement 24%, About the same 11%

Wanting to do a good job on school assignments. — Definite improvement 64%, Some improvement 18%, About the same 15%

Valuing his/her education — Definite improvement 46%, Some improvement 33%, About the same 21%

Relationships with teachers — Definite improvement 46%, Some improvement 32%, About the same 19%

Attitude towards school — Definite improvement 54%, Some improvement 23%, About the same 21%

Behavior at school — Definite improvement 46%, Some improvement 30%, About the same 19%, A little worse 5%

School attendance — Definite improvement 37%, Some improvement 37%, About the same 23%

Relationships with family members — Definite improvement 36%, Some improvement 31%, About the same 33%

Behavior at home — Definite improvement 25%, Some improvement 36%, About the same 31%, A little worse 8%

Legend: Definite improvement, Some improvement, About the same, A little worse, A lot worse

Figure 12 Data Table for Parents' Reflection of Changes in Students since 2015–16

| Question Stem Parent Survey | Percent Definite Improvement | Percent Some Improvement | Percent About the Same | Percent a little Worse | Percent a Lot Worse |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Completing school work on time. | 63% | 24% | 11% | 0% | 3% |
| Wanting to do a good job on school assignments. | 64% | 18% | 15% | 3% | 0% |
| Valuing his/her education | 46% | 33% | 21% | 0% | 0% |
| Relationships with teachers | 46% | 32% | 19% | 3% | 0% |
| Attitude towards school | 54% | 23% | 21% | 3% | 0% |
| Behavior at school | 46% | 30% | 19% | 5% | 0% |
| School attendance | 37% | 37% | 23% | 3% | 0% |
| Relationships with family members | 36% | 31% | 33% | 0% | 0% |
| Behavior at home | 25% | 36% | 31% | 8% | 0% |

To learn more about the program through the view of parents, the survey also included three open-ended questions where parent could elaborate on their program experiences. Samples of parent responses are provided with the question stems below.

**Has the CARE or Promise Program benefitted your child?**
- Before entering the CARE program, my student was not attending school on a regular basis. Their attendance has improved and they have only missed school when they've been sick.
- She is more empowered not to give in to peer pressure and to be more self sufficient on her own.
- His teacher has been an amazing support for my son. He's been able to build up his confidence, form better organizational skills and study habits, and help him enjoy school more.
- Previously my child was not participating in any class, not doing class work, homework, or talking to the teacher, even when the teacher was talking to him. Now he has improved in all of the areas mentioned above.
- Yes. He participates in school and is doing his school work. He doesn't get zeros on assignments very often like he did last year. He is less unhappy than he was last year.

- Yes, my son was struggling to keep up in his classes, now he gets the help he needs to keep up. The only issue he has is his regular science class. The teacher won't slow down for the care kids so they struggle to keep up.
- Yes, the one on one attention has greatly helped my student to manage time better and achieve goals.  My student is given the opportunity to also expand in areas where they are already have an interest and are excelling to further promote confidence in other areas.
- Getting along with other kids.  Staying out of the office.
- YES. This program has brought peace and confidence to my child, he enjoys seeing the success he gets from trying, for the first time his grades are really good.  He is sleeping better and overall a happier kid since starting this program. Although my son still has ADD and a preference to not spend hours on one task, he is seeing positive results from being in this program.

## Has the CARE or Promise Program benefitted you?
- I have talked with his teacher several times and she has told me some great things about my son. She actually engages him in the classroom rather than letting him just sit all by himself and stare off into space. He seems happier at home this school year.
- It helped me by helping my son. I was constantly contacting his teachers about missing assignments and I believe he was struggling so he was not completing his assignments. Since the program, I am no longer stressed because he does not miss assignments and he is so much more motivated.
- It's given me a break from the endless calls from the attendance office.
- Yes, I'm not as stressed as I was with him being in regular school. Not knowing whether he was getting credit or turning stuff in.
- Yes, speaking for my whole family the CARE program has made a great benefit, we are thrilled to see our son grow and love his school.  He is proud of his accomplishments and he feels motivated to do well on subjects that he likes.
- Giving my child hope.
- Knowing my daughter is being cared for and supported. She has someone looking after her.
- We felt supported and we like that our daughter is getting help.

## Comments or ideas to improve the program:
- I don't know enough about the program to expand on that, but from my students experience, I would say the program should be offered and available to more students.
- Make it so the CARE kids don't have to mix with regular kids classes that require them to keep pace with the larger classes
- More CARE teachers so more students can get in the classes and not be on a waiting list.
- Need to set goals at beginning of the year and determine if goals are satisfied or status.

Lastly, when parents were asked if they would recommend the CARE or Promise program to other parents, 98% indicated they would.

## Program Teacher Perceptions

To learn more about their perceptions of the program, and to collect feedback for program improvement, program teachers were assessed by adding several questions to an existing school staff survey. Analyses provided in this section include questions from the existing survey that were relevant to the program, as well as the questions that were added specifically to inform this evaluation. For the selected items, program teachers indicated their level of agreement to 10 items about the program using a 4-point scale where a score of 4 corresponded to "strongly agree", a score of 3 to "agree", a score of 2 to "disagree", and a score of 1 to "strongly disagree". A "not applicable" option was also available. Levels of agree and strongly agree were combined into an overall category of agreement.

Table 7 summarizes the responses of the nine CARE and Promise program teachers from nine program sites who had completed the survey. Overall, teacher responses validated parent and student survey responses. Teachers all agreed that they communicated with parents when students were struggling or having behavioral issues. Teachers believed the school was a safe environment and that they were providing students with appropriate skills.

Table 7. CARE and Promise Program Teacher Responses to Select Items

| Staff Survey Item | Response Count | Percent Agree or Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|
| The students look forward to coming to school each day. | 9 | 78% |
| I feel that the school is a safe environment for students. | 9 | 100% |
| The school prepares students for future college, career paths, or transitions to other schools. | 9 | 89% |
| The staff communicates with parents when a student is having trouble learning, having behavioral or other social issues. | 9 | 100% |
| Parents and guardians are provided resources and opportunities for training needed to support their students at home. | 8 | 75% |
| If appropriate, students are provided with instruction in daily living skills, communication, and motor skills. | 6 | 100% |

The last section of the survey included two items that were targeted towards CARE and Promise program teachers and utilized open-ended questions. The questions stems and all responses provided by teachers are shown below.

**What are the challenges of being a SCOE CARE or Promise program teacher?**

- 1. Sometimes feelings of isolation - our class is different, in spite of being at the same school. The dynamics of CARE and its' needs are truly different.  Sometimes the other teachers at comprehensive schools don't fully understand our challenges with this population.   I end up feeling sort of pressured to get my kids "up to speed" academically or behaviorally to try to curb some of their complaints.  2.  I don't think we have enough collaboration with other CARE teachers.  We, the few, could encourage each other, share, plan, and discuss student strategies like no other cohort of teachers could!   I have noticed that at our schools, the regular ed teachers meet all the time to discuss, plan, and work through problems.  As a CARE teacher, while I do meet frequently with these other teachers on my campus, I believe I could grow more fully as a CARE teacher by meeting with other CARE teachers.  I also think PD specifically designed to meet our needs throughout the school year would serve us well. (I especially liked the Love & Logic and Anxiety training we were afforded this year!  Thank you).  In the end, I think it would really boost CARE teacher morale, provide better insight into the program, and even help with teacher retention if we could collaborate. I know it will be hard, but it will benefit the program.  3.  Other times I am challenged with worry about keeping the kids motivated and about their behavior (which I am finding tends to escalate due to gathering kids with a bunch of diverse problems into one classroom).

- Attendance seems to be one of our biggest challenges. Students may miss several days a week with no note or phone call from parents. I also have three students who had long-term absences that were unexcused.

- Class size...interventions classes should not have 22 students.  Teaching 3 core academic subjects.  Having to do all functions-- administrative duties etc....

- Decentralization

- Helping students with grave emotional needs (suicidal thoughts, CPS reports, running away...)

- My school has a low population of students. Instead of enrolling students who fit the CARE "profile" I was given a ton of behavior problems. Students also didn't understand the program before they were enrolled and it was an uphill battle all year to get kids invested in the program and in themselves.

- One of the challenges I faced this year as a SCOE CARE teacher was not having enough substitute teachers to cover sub requests.

- The mandated curriculum (iLit and Word Intelligence) is not engaging for my students, not does it provide them with the skills they need.

**In what areas would you like to receive more support, assistance, or training?**

- An all CARE meeting where we discuss the "meat and potatoes" of the program and not have some special guess come in and discuss classroom management with us...We will never grow as an entity if we can not learn from one another -- best practices.

- Collaboration, please refer to the notes in number 10 :)
- I feel support, assistance and training opportunities are ample. :)
- I feel that I receive all the support and assistance I ever ask for.  The program is very good at making sure its teachers are supported.
- I feel very supported!
- None at this time

Below are additional teacher comments and feedback relevant to the program that were collected from other areas of the survey:

- I am involved in Professional Development opportunities, PLC groups, and all staff meetings at the Foothill campus and with the Twin Rivers District.  I believe the Administrative staff has not been as supportive as they could be.  I have been on this campus for three years.  After all this time, the Administrative staff still seems to be unclear as to the purpose of the CARE program.
- I love this school and am very happy to now have an email & access to student data!
- The administration, both at the county level and on my campus are very supportive of the CARE class and model.
- Students have access to any and all classes other students are able to take.
- My school has a low population of students. Instead of enrolling students who fit the CARE "profile" I was given a ton of behavior problems. Students also didn't understand the program before they were enrolled and it was an uphill battle all year to get kids invested in the program and in themselves.

Overall, the teachers believed that the program is a positive experience for students that supports students and parents and meaningful student outcomes.  Teachers' inclusion in the school culture, and support from program staff, are necessary for program success. Any of the challenges they described reflect the population of students they serve and highlight the importance of program fit for students.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Results from the 2016–17 cohort report indicate that the CARE and Promise programs provide valuable educational support to students at risk. Overall findings were:

- Students' grades in English, math, history, and science showed improvement at the majority of schools.
- Students were re-engaging with their school—69% had participated in extracurricular activities.
- Student attendance and rates of chronic absenteeism did not show improvement at a statistically significant level.
- Students noted improvements in their completion and quality of assignments.
- Students recognized the improvements they saw in their grades.

- Students described that their parents benefitted from the program by being less stressed about their student's school performance.
- Students and parents equally believed that students valued their education more.
- Parents noted improvements in the completion and quality of their child's assignments.
- Parents appreciated the support their children received and the improvement in academics.
- Teachers provided students with a supportive environment that engaged students in learning during times when school attendance was challenging.
- Finding the right teachers and students for the program is essential to its success.

The results show that the CARE and promise programs can be effective academic intervention programs for students who are at risk. The fact that students indicated a greater commitment to their academics while also acknowledging their lack of enthusiasm for attending school demonstrates the need to provide alternative methods for course and credit completion that do not rely on daily attendance for success.

Recommendations for the programs based upon feedback from students, parents, and teachers would be:

- Providing more opportunities for students to engage in hands-on learning through field trips and activities
- Having teachers spend more time discussing career options and future ideas with students
- Implementing structures whereby program teachers can share practices with one another
- Ensuring that the program teacher is an integral part of the host school
- Investigate further the variability of student attendance across program sites

The value of the CARE and Promise programs is evident in the evaluation of the 2016–17 Year 1 Cohort report. Future reports will provide multi-cohort analyses and will assess long-term student outcomes of program participation.