

AT&T **ASPIRE** PROGRAM

Evaluation Report

2011-2012

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Program Description

The overarching aim of the AT&T High School Success program is to intervene early in the high school careers of at-risk youth and help guide them towards successful high school completion.

The key objectives of the program are as follows:

- To provide school-based support services and activities so that at-risk 9th and 10th grade students in alternative schools are on track for graduation.
- To improve the at-risk 9th and 10th grade program participants' school attendance
- To increase at-risk 9th and 10th grade program participants' knowledge of educational and vocational career opportunities after high school.

Participants

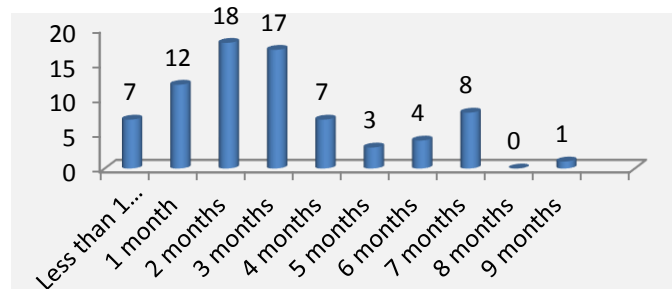
A total of **78** students were served by the program. Demographic information is provided on all students served by the program regardless of length of program involvement. The program is serving the target population, at risk 9th and 10th grade students.

	Demographic	Breckinridge	Buechel	Total
Gender	Male	68.6%	55.8%	61.5%
	Female	31.4%	44.2%	38.5%
Grade	9	25.7%	79.1%	55.1%
	10	60.0%	20.9%	38.5%
	11	2.9%	0.0%	1.3%
	12	11.4%	0.0%	5.1%
Race	Black	62.9%	72.1%	67.9%
	Other	8.5%	4.7%	6.5%
	White	28.6%	23.3%	25.6%
Lunch	Free-Red	65.8%	62.8%	64.3%
	Paid	34.2%	37.2%	35.7%
ECE	ECE	17.1%	7.0%	11.5%
Limited English	LEP	0.0%	2.3%	1.3%
Homeless	Homeless	22.9%	32.6%	28.2%

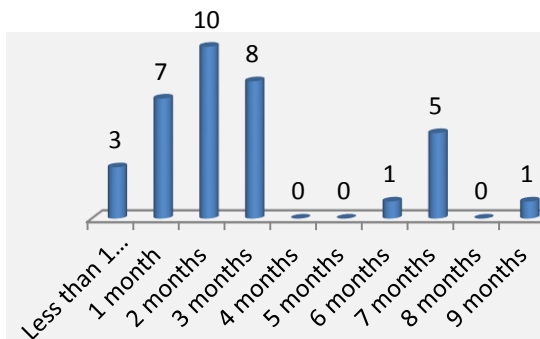
Time in Program

- Due to the transient nature of the student population served in the program schools, the average amount of time students spent in the program was 3 months. Enrollment in the program occurs on an ongoing basis, so as student withdraw from the school; new students are enrolled in the program.

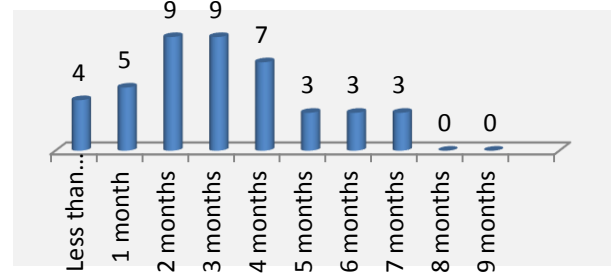
months in ASPIRE program



months in ASPIRE program: Breck-Metro



months in ASPIRE program: Buechel Metro

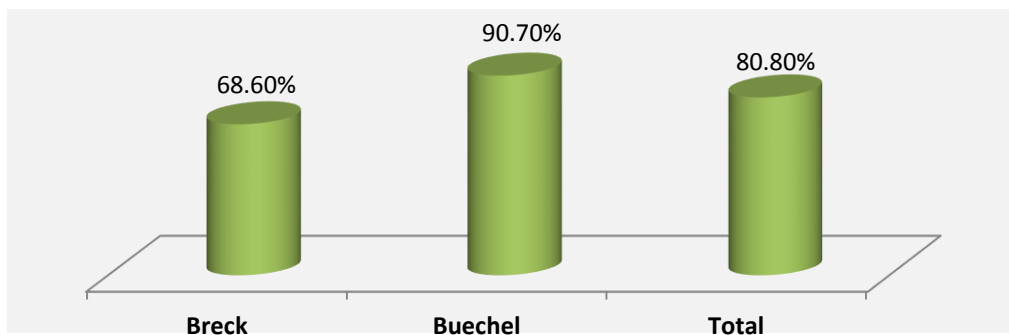


Program Activity Participation

Course Recovery

- 81% of students in the program participated in course Recovery

Percent of ASPIRE students in Course Recovery (n=78)

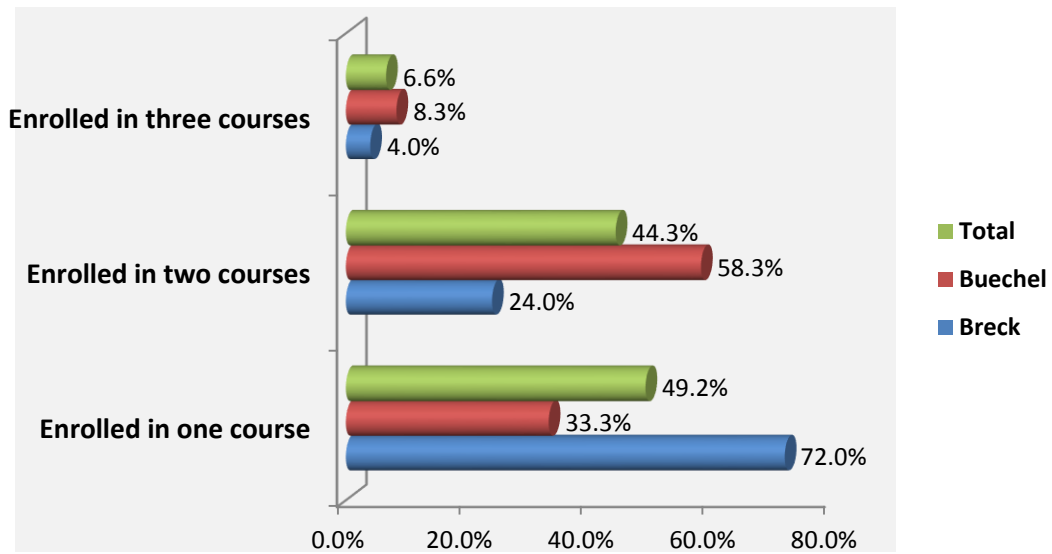


- English, Math and Science were the most frequent credit recovery course subject areas

Course Subject	Percent (N=97 courses)
English	34.0%
Math	34.0%
Science	23.7%
Social Studies	7.2%
Geography	1.0%

- Overall, half of the students (50.9%) were enrolled in two or more course recovery courses

Number of Courses enrolled in Course Recovery



Career and Job Related Activities

- ALL students that participated in the program engaged in a self assessment around their values, interests and skills, as well as their Individual Learning Plan Career Assessment, and engaged in one-on-one conferences with the career planner.
- The lowest activity rate was around college visits.
- There were some differences by school in the activities participation such as career fair.

Activity	Participation Rates		
	BRECK n=35	BUECHEL n=43	TOTAL N=78
Self Assessment – Values	100%	100%	100%
Self Assessment – Interests	100%	100%	100%
Self Assessment -Skills	100%	100%	100%
Exploration	80.0%	97.7%	89.7%
Presentation	91.4%	100%	96.2%
One-on-One Conference Attendance	97.1%	100%	98.7%
One-on-One Conference Academics	82.9%	100%	92.3%
One-on-One Conference Other	100%	100%	100%
College and Career Support Activities			
Individual Learning Plan Career Assessment	100%	100%	100%
Individual Learning Plan Resume	62.9%	67.4%	65.4%
College Visit	2.9%	0%	1.3%
Career Fair	42.8%	11.6%	27.2%
Field Trip	17.1%	11.6%	14.1%
College/Vocational Preparation	25.7%	4.7%	14.1%
Mock Interview	48.6%	37.2%	42.3%
Employment Follow-up	42.9%	25.6%	33.3%
Application Assistance	80.0%	76.7%	78.2%
Job Search Activities	65.7%	55.8%	60.3%

Speakers and Topics:

- As shown in the table below, the speakers represented a wide array of topics and community organizations.
- Students attended an average of 5 speaker sessions (Buechel avg. = 6; Breck avg. =4)

Name of Speaker/Organization	Presentation Topic
Art Institute	College info session/career exploring
Candice Johnson	Financial Aid/scholarships
Counselors Corner	Importance of graduating/future
Empire Beauty School	Careers / Colleges / Job opp.
BBT	Banking (5 wk course)
Focus Forward	ATT program
Girl Focus Group	Self Esteem
Inmates	Choices/Intervention
January Taylor (Metro Medical Solutions)	Career Exploring/Medical Coding
JCTC	College info session/career exploring
Joe Bivens (Fire Fighter)	Career Exploring / work ethic
Junior achievement - 8 week program	Motivational
Keisha Blackman (Social Worker)	Career Exploring/work ethic
Lincoln College	College info/ Mechanical
Jennifer Chandler/Nortons Hospital	Career Exploring/work ethic/Nurse Shadowing
Lisa Harrison (Professional Athlete)	Motivational
Shakespeare society	Career Exploring/educational/Theatre'
Spencerian	Career Exploring / work ethic
Sullivan	college info session
Sullivan Tech	college info session
Tarc	Career Exploring/work ethic
Tim Harrison (Hayes Auto)	Career Exploring / work ethic
UPS	Earn and Learn Program
American Barbering College	Careers / Colleges / Job opp.
ATC Prep/ ASVAB	Career / College / Test Prep

- There was an equal distribution of the amount of exposure student participants had with the various speakers, with the majority of students (73.4%) hearing four or more speakers/presentations.

Number of Speakers	% of students
1-3 speakers	25.30%
4-6 speakers	43.00%
7+ speakers	30.40%

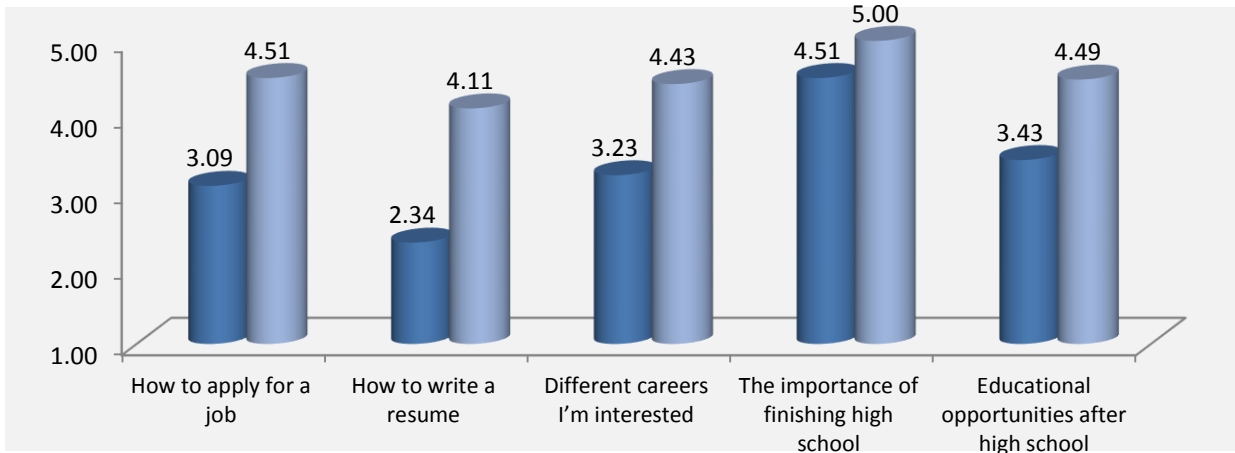
Student Survey Results: Self report change in knowledge and program impact

The students completed a retrospective survey at the end of their program participation. A total of 35 student surveys were collected (13 from Breckinridge 52% response rate; and 22 from Buechel for a 65% response rate. The response rate is based on the number of students enrolled 2+ months in the program).

- There were statistically significant increases in the student’s level of awareness and likelihood of graduating (14% increase) before they participated in the program to post program.
- There was a 30% increase in participants’ knowledge of educational opportunities from before to after the program.
- 80% of participants reported an increase in knowledge job acquiring skills (how to apply, write resume)

Change in students knowledge

■ Before program ■ After program



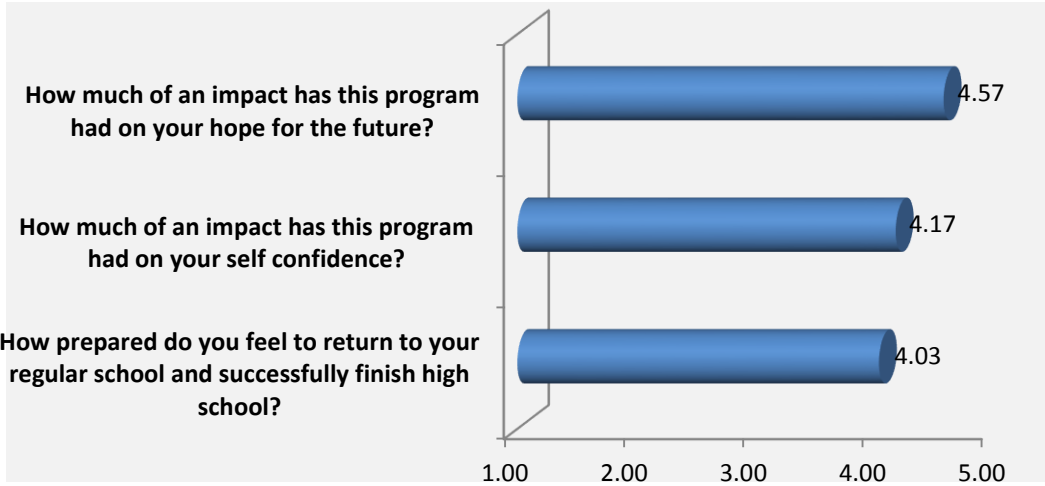
% students showing gains

How to apply for a job	80.0%*
How to write a resume	82.8%*
Different careers I'm interested in	62.8%*
The importance of finishing high school	20.0%
Educational opportunities after high school	60.0%*

*statistically significant gains

- The participants reported that the program has had a large impact on their hope for the future and self confidence.

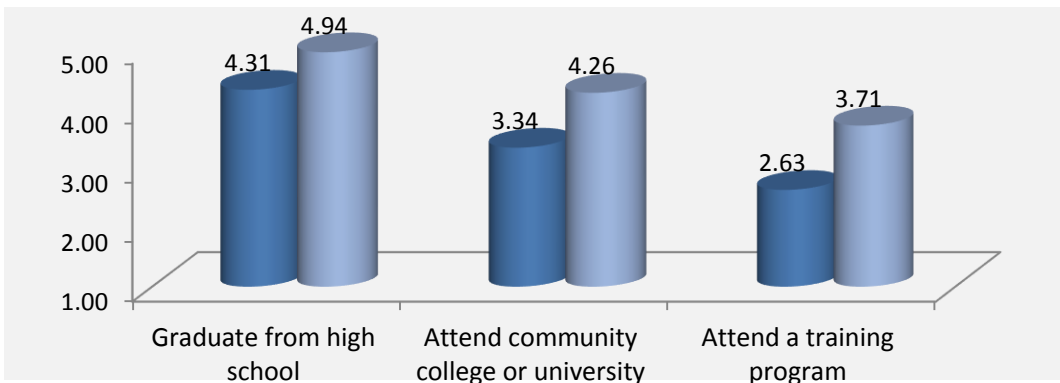
Avg. Response to Questions: 1=not at all, 5= very much



- There were statistically significant increases in the student’s level of awareness and likelihood of graduating (14% increase) before they participated in the program to post program.
- There was a 30% increase in participants’ knowledge of educational opportunities from before to after the program.

Change in students likelihood

■ Before program ■ After program



	% students showing gains
Graduate from high school	31.4%*
Attend community college or university	57.1%*
Attend a training program	62.8%*

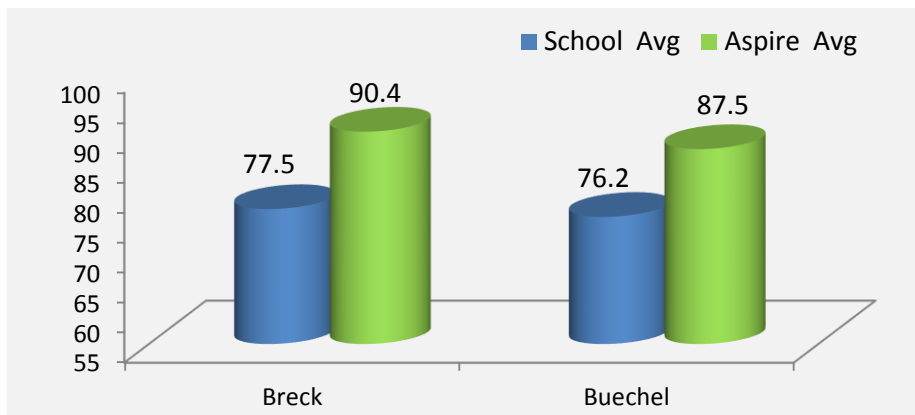
*statistically significant gains

Attendance and Credit Attainment

Analyses of attendance and credit attainment were conducted on students who were in the program for three months or more. Overall, there were 40 students that met the criteria for participation (Breck: $n= 18$, Buechel: $n=22$). The attendance was compared with the school average.

- The total overall school attendance for ASPIRE participants was 88.9%
- ASPIRE participants had higher overall attendance than the student population at each ASIRE school.
- The average attendance for participants at Breck was 90.4 (with a range of 46% - 100%)
- The average attendance for participants at Buechel was 87.5% (with a range of 34% - 100%)

Average Attendance: School vs. Aspire



- In terms of credit attainment, the data show that students in the program for three or more months had an average credit attainment rate of 69.0%. Students in the program for 0-2 months had a credit attainment rate of 63.1%.

Student Perceptions: Impact of program, limitations, and feedback

Student perceptions were collected through focus groups and open-ended questions on the student survey. The voices of participating students provide important and valuable feedback on the personal impact of the program and also identify areas for improvement.

Focus Group Results

Positive aspects of program: The students expressed that the top three and most beneficial programmatic components include:

- Career/motivational/college speakers
 - Individual support from career planner
 - Help with resume writing and mock job interviews
- The majority said that the program has an impact on their attendance on the days they know there is a program related activity (speaker/fair or individual time with Ms Carter).
- The majority also felt that the program has opened up learning about possibilities after graduation and is helping them stay on track for graduation more so than if they were not in the program. Each student had a goal for after they graduate, most of which included a college major or career field they selected.

Limitations and areas for program improvement: The majority of students in the focus group said they would like:

- More time with Ms. Carter (requests for more time with the career planner has been a top finding of the evaluation every year but difficult to fix because the career planner is split between schools)
- Opportunities to go out and experience college campus and career/work environments outside of the school
- Incentives to earn throughout the program

Areas of Concern: While the focus group questions were centered on the program, during the course of the focus group the students shared several aspects of their experience in the school that indicated areas of concern including lack of clarity regarding credits and class assignments, amount of time it takes to see the school counselor, non-challenging classroom instruction, and harsh treatment by security and police and some school staff and use of ISAP and suspension.

Open-Ended Survey Results

At the end of the program, students were given the opportunity to provide additional feedback through open response items. Results triangulate with the quantitative and focus group data.

Most Helpful Aspects of The Program	Sample Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One on One time with Ms. Carter ● Speakers ● Course- Recovery ● Job and resume support ● Career Fair 	<p><i>"This program helped me very well I like the speakers that come in, they motivate me to want to go to college."</i></p> <p><i>"Ms. Carter motivates me to go to colleges to follow my dream"</i></p> <p><i>"I liked learning how to take test with strategies Ms. Carter taught."</i></p> <p><i>"Speakers were helpful to me by telling me the mistakes they have did that led them year in the penitentiary and I made a goal in life to stay out of trouble and make people say I'm a good person"</i></p> <p><i>"the program helped me by seeing what I need to do for a bright future and it gives job opportunity and information with schools and careers"</i></p>
What program and/or school do to help support the journey towards graduation	Sample Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● College Visits/tours of campus ● More career fairs & job information/job shadowing ● Hands-on activities and after school tutoring ● Motivation and support from teachers/staff in building 	<p><i>"show different careers and colleges that offer jobs in construction and visiting college campus"</i></p> <p><i>"they could have two career fairs, and more ideas for colleges for example, have tours of some college campuses"</i></p> <p><i>"provide and give me a great support toward graduation, more speaker each week that talks about different career in life"</i></p> <p><i>"I wish Breckenridge had after school tutoring and I wish the program can get more time with the students"</i></p> <p><i>"Visit other schools to see what it's like on college campus. I never visit one before"</i></p> <p><i>"The schools can provide more help and support from the teachers/staff in the building"</i></p>
Feedback/Comments on Program	Sample Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Very Positive Feedback about the programs impact 	<p><i>"it's a good program to be in. it helps me apply to a job and it helps me get through school"</i></p> <p><i>"This program is very helpful and I thank all of the people helping out with this program. It has helped me to finally graduate and believe I may have a future cause I didn't think I did."</i></p> <p><i>"Thanks for letting come to this program, to help me with my life"</i></p> <p><i>"I like this program and it helped me to learn stuff I don't usually learn in class"</i></p>

Summary & Recommendations

The evaluation results indicate that the program is having a positive impact on many student participants, despite the challenges with the transient nature of the school populations. The results indicate that the program is meeting or exceeding the objectives set forth as shown in the chart below.

Objective/Measure	Results	Status
Objective 1: To provide school-based support services and activities so that at-risk 9 th and 10 th grade students in alternative schools are on track for graduation		
Performance Measure 1.1: Each grant year, a minimum of 50 students (25 per school) will participate in the LEEP program.	78	Exceeded
Performance Measure 1.2: Each grant year participating students will increase their number of course credits from pre-to post participation through course recovery.	69% Credit Attainment	Need Comparison
Performance Measure 1.3: Students' belief in their likelihood of graduating from high school will increase.	14% increase	Exceeded
Objective 2: To improve the at-risk 9 th and 10 th grade program participants' school attendance.		
Performance Measure 2.1: Each grant year participating students will increase their attendance rate by 10%.	Average of 12% higher attendance	Exceeded
Objective 3: To increase at-risk 9 th and 10 th grade program participants' knowledge of educational and vocational career opportunities after high school.		
Performance Measure 3.1: Each grant year participating students will experience a 10% increase in their knowledge of educational and vocational career opportunities after high school.	30% increase	Exceeded

Efforts towards continuous improvement could include the following **recommendations**:

- Consider increasing the exposure to post-secondary educational opportunities and opportunities to experience college campuses. Also, consider increasing college/vocational prep activities with students.
- Consider additional career fairs and job shadowing opportunities for students.
- Follow-up of students that transition back in regular school is important to ensure they have access to continued support towards graduation and post secondary educational and career related opportunities.