

THE BRONX ACHIEVEMENT PACT

Every Student Counts



Overview

The Bronx Achievement Pact works to improve educational outcomes in the Bronx by closing the gaps in the high school-college pipeline. This comprehensive strategy connects Bronx high schools and higher education institutions, providing integrated and holistic support to students of all ability levels. Partnering with high schools while using college expertise and resources, the Bronx Achievement Pact enhances curriculum and instruction, increasing college and career possibilities for the traditionally underserved student population in the Bronx. By expanding student opportunities within public high schools, the Bronx Achievement Pact is a scalable and sustainable educational solution.

The Problem of Educational Access and Attainment

A National Crisis

In an ever-evolving global economy, higher education is no longer a privilege for a fortunate few, but must become a necessity for all. The majority of jobs will require a college degree by 2020. For nearly all Americans, the new path to social mobility runs through college. Unfortunately, for too many low-income and minority students, that path is out of reach. While 41% of Americans in 2009 attained at least an associate's degree, only 29% of black Americans and 19% of Hispanic Americans earned the same credential. For low-income students, the problem is even more severe; in 2008 only 11% of

GOALS

- Raise High School Graduation Rates
- Improve College Readiness
- Increase College Enrollment and Persistence

The Bronx Achievement Pact's comprehensive strategy integrates successful high school and college experiences.

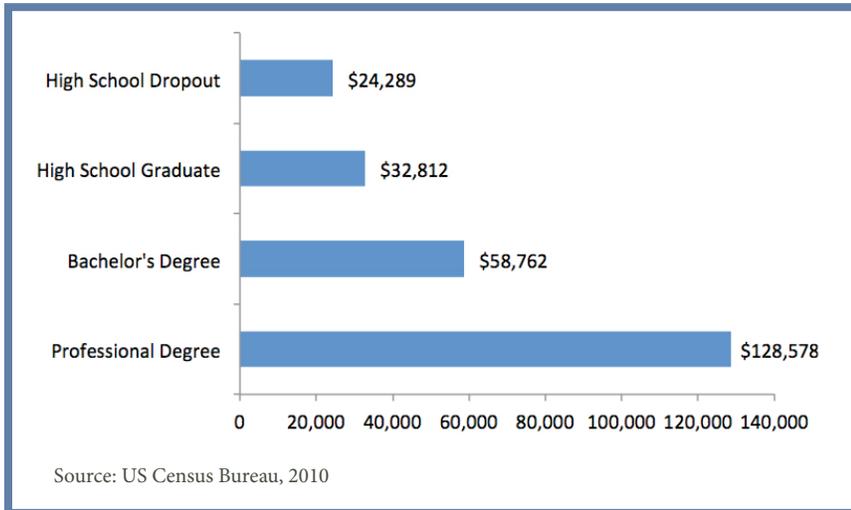
- (1) *Early College Program;*
- (2) *College and Career Exploration;*
- (3) *Summer Support;*
- (4) *Learning Excellence and;*
- (5) *Parent and Community Engagement.*

low-income young adults completed a college degree by age 25.¹ Not surprisingly, the correlation between college completion and socio-economic status is strong. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median earnings of individuals with less than a high school education, as of 2009, was \$18,342, while high school graduates earned \$26,776, holders of bachelor's degree earned \$47,510, and individuals with advanced degrees earned \$62,313.² More troubling is the fact that a large proportion of low-income and minority youth are not making it to high

¹ The College Board (2011)

² US Census Bureau (2012)

Figure 1: Earnings by Education Levels, United States



school graduation; between one-quarter and one-third of low-income minority youth across the nation drop out of high school, effectively ending their chance at higher education before they even begin.³

The Bronx

The Bronx exemplifies these problems all too clearly. Demographically, the Bronx is 30% Black and 54% Hispanic.⁴ Additionally, almost 1/3 of Bronx adults and over 40% of Bronx children live below the poverty line, making the borough's residents especially vulnerable to facing high barriers to educational attainment.⁵

Data bear this out: while 59% of Bronx students graduate from high school, only 11% of Bronx adults have completed a bachelor's degree.⁶ One reason for the Bronx's low college completion rates is that few Bronx students who graduate from high school are prepared for the rigors of college: just 17% of Bronx high school graduates are considered "college ready" by the New York State Education

Department.⁷ Research has shown that the strongest predictor of college readiness is the rigor and quality of students' high school courses; more challenging coursework in high school teaches students the habits of mind and skills necessary for success in college.⁸ Some experts argue that high school graduation requirements are not as rigorous as they should be to prepare students for college. For example, in New York State, high school graduation

requirements are based on taking coursework and passing Regents' exams in 5 subject areas with a score of 65 or higher on a scale of 100. Numerous studies have shown, however, that the minimum threshold for college readiness, as determined by Regents' exams, is a score of 75 or 80.⁹

It is imperative to close the gaps between high school graduation and college readiness.

Solution

In order to increase the number of Bronx students who graduate from high school ready to succeed in and graduate from college, it is imperative to close the gaps between high school graduation and college readiness.

3 Institute for Higher Education Policy (2010) 3 Institute for Higher Education Policy (2010)

4 US Census Bureau (2010)

5 US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2010)

6 Statistics from NYC Department of Education (2011); US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2010)

7 New York State Education Department (2011). Note: NYSED's measure of "college readiness" is defined as a score of 75 or above on the English Regents' exam or an 80 on an advanced Math Regents' exam.

8 Adelman (2006)

9 New York State Board of Regents (2010)

The Bronx Achievement Pact is an innovative initiative that aims to: (1) raise high school graduation rates; (2) improve college readiness; and (3) increase college enrollment and persistence. This program creates a new paradigm for solving our nation's educational problems. Colleges and universities must partner with high schools to promote college readiness and ensure that all students are afforded the opportunity to pursue higher education.

Opportunity

The troubling educational landscape in the Bronx presents a unique opportunity to implement a revolutionary new educational initiative such as the Bronx Achievement Pact. The Bronx has the lowest high school graduation rates and the lowest per capita income in the five boroughs of New York City. High school graduates earn \$331,000 more income over a lifetime than high school dropouts.¹⁰ If just 1% more Bronx students graduated from high school in 2010, they could collectively see over \$50 million in additional lifetime income. If 10% more Bronx students graduate from high school, their additional collective lifetime income would be over \$500 million.ⁱ All New Yorkers would see corresponding benefits to the economy in increased tax revenues and greater accumulation of wealth.¹¹

The benefits of college degree attainment are even more significant. College graduates earn \$964,000 more over a lifetime than high school graduates.¹² If just 1% more Bronx adults earned a college degree, they could see over \$8 billion in additional lifetime income.ⁱⁱ The implications of this additional revenue for the economic state of the Bronx are staggering.

By improving opportunities for tens of thousands of Bronx students to graduate from high school, attend and persist in college, the Bronx Achievement Pact presents an unprecedented opportunity to

transform educational and economic outcomes for the Bronx, the city, and even the nation. The Bronx Achievement Pact is a scalable solution that can help solve the national educational crisis.

Program Model

The Bronx Achievement Pact is an innovative program that integrates the high school and college experiences.

The Early College Program

Earn an associate's degree while still in high school, free of charge.

The Early College Program offers concurrent and dual enrollment within existing public high schools in the Bronx. High school students take a rigorous sequence of courses and graduate from high school with 30 hours of college credit. Motivated students can complete an additional 30 credits over summers, weekends, and school breaks to earn an associate's degree. The Early College Program keeps students in public high schools and enhances schools' ability to provide a college-ready education.

College and Career Exploration

Discover the infinite possibilities of college and career.

College and Career Exploration builds awareness about all aspects of the college process and career pathways. By ensuring that students are continuously exposed to information about college, financial aid, and inspired by the variety of career options available to college degree-holders, these seminars help close the knowledge gaps that limit opportunities for low-income and minority youth.

10 Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce (2011)

11 Alliance for Excellent Education (2007)

12 Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce (2011)

Summer Support

Accomplish academic goals to get back on track for graduation.

Summer Support builds skills in critical thinking, math, and literacy by enhancing summer school for struggling students, while also inspiring students to consider future opportunities through exposure to college professors and visits to college campuses.

Learning Excellence

Learn strategies for excellence from successful college students.

Learning Excellence offers comprehensive academic support for high school students through focused tutoring relationships with successful college students. By offering individualized academic assistance and supportive mentoring through the high school and college processes, Learning Excellence encourages students to achieve to their highest potential.

Parent and Community Engagement

Strengthen parental support for education in high school, college, and beyond.

Parent and Community Engagement provides parents with the knowledge and skills to encourage their children on the path to and through college. As parents are a crucial piece in the educational equation, this program involves parents in both high school and college planning and capitalizes on the resources and workshops of the innovative Bronx Parent Center.

A Proven Strategy

The Bronx Achievement Pact is based on research into best practices for increasing high school graduation, improving college readiness, and increasing college enrollments.

Research shows that low-income and minority students are much more likely to graduate from college if they complete at least 20 college credits in their first year of college.¹³ By providing Bronx students with the opportunity to complete up to 60 credits before they even begin their freshman year of college, the Bronx Achievement Pact sets students on a transformational pathway to college graduation and a rewarding career.

Low-income and minority students, often the first in their families to graduate from high school and attend college, do not generally have access to information about the college process, financial aid, and the multitude of career options available to them.¹⁴ By leveraging the talents and resources at Mercy College to offer College Knowledge and Career Exploration seminars, the Bronx Achievement Pact provides students with this crucial college and career information as early as 9th grade.

Students who fail classes early in their high school career face an increased risk of dropping out of high school. In fact, success in ninth grade coursework is the best single predictor of high school graduation.¹⁵ The Bronx Achievement Pact identifies struggling 9th graders and enrolls them in the Summer Support program to build skills and reinvest them in their future academic possibilities, thus helping to overcome crucial barriers to high school graduation and college success.

Mentoring and tutoring programs can mitigate risk factors that lead to dropping out of high school; sustained mentoring relationships reduce absenteeism, improve attitudes towards school, and also increase students' likelihood of enrolling in college.¹⁶ By giving students access to the Learning

13 Brown Lerner and Brand (2006)

14 Alliance for Excellent Education (2009)

15 National Mentoring Partnership (2012)

16 Grodsky and Jones (2004); McWhirter (1997)

Excellence program, the Bronx Achievement Pact enhances their abilities to succeed in high school and college.

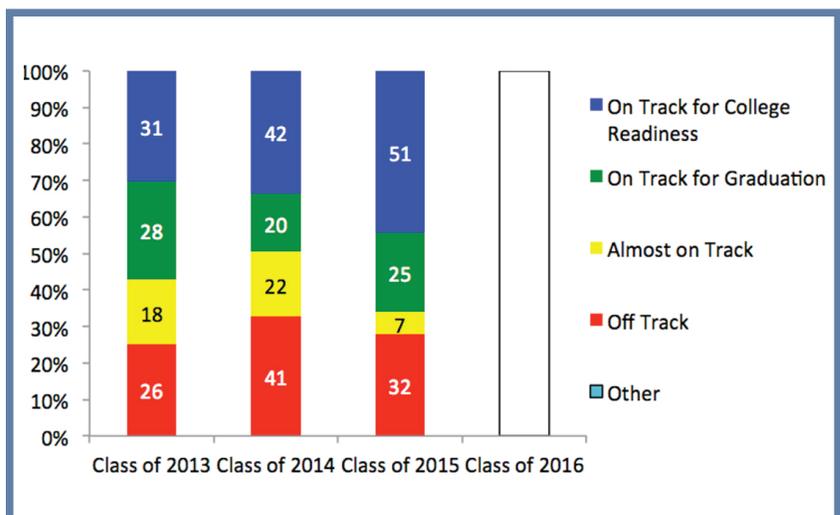
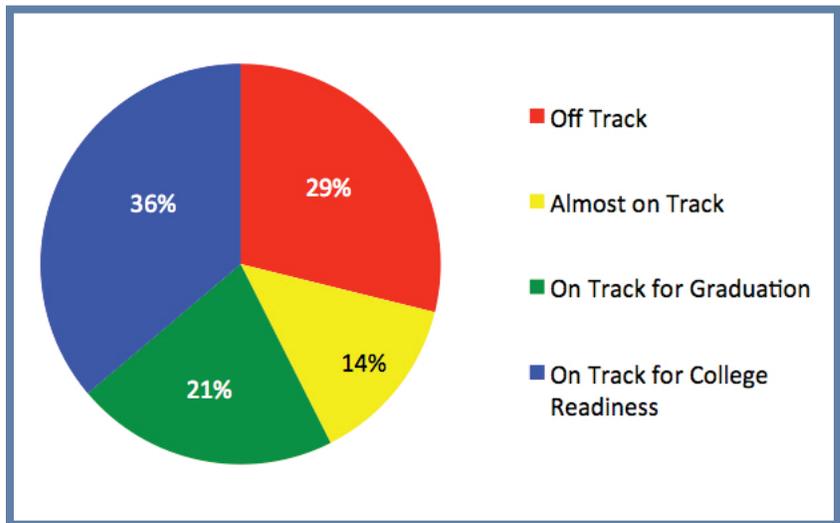
The Bronx Achievement Pact recognizes that parents are a crucial part of ensuring students' academic success. Research backs this up: students whose parents are actively involved in their education are more likely to earn high grades and test scores, graduate from high school, and enroll in college.¹⁷ The Bronx Achievement Pact actively engages parents in their children's education through the resources and workshops of the Bronx Parent Center, further enhancing student support at home.

In order to ensure program quality and success, the Bronx Achievement Pact will track students' grades, high school and college course completion, and knowledge of college and careers, as well as graduation rates, college readiness, and college enrollment rates at the school level. These data will be used to refine programming and monitor results.

A Scalable Model

Increasing educational attainment is a national priority that requires a plan to raise achievement in underperforming schools. The Bronx Achievement Pact is a scalable, innovative model of public-private collaboration focused on enhancing success in academically challenged public high schools. Mercy College will partner with Harry S Truman High School in the northwest Bronx to pilot the Bronx Achievement Pact in September 2012. The program

Figures 2 and 3: Sample School-Level Trackers to Monitor Progress toward High School Graduation and College Readiness



will expand into an additional Bronx high school in September 2013. Phase 3 will add 2-5 high schools per annum until 2025 to include over 50 target Bronx high schools with graduation rates below 70%, servicing nearly 30,000 students. In order to sustain and expand programming throughout the Bronx, the Bronx Achievement Pact aims to raise \$100 million in operating and endowment funds, available in perpetuity. This funding will serve to cover program costs so that all students in target schools can take advantage of the Bronx Achievement Pact.

17 Henderson and Mapp (2002)

References

Adelman (2006). The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School through College. US Department of Education. Retrieved from: <http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/toolboxrevisit/toolbox.pdf>

Alliance for Excellent Education (2007). Issue Brief: Hidden Benefits: The Impact of High School Graduation on Household Wealth. Retrieved from: <http://www.all4ed.org/files/hiddenbenefits.pdf>

Alliance for Excellent Education (2009). Fact Sheet: High School Dropouts in America. Retrieved from: http://www.all4ed.org/files/GraduationRates_FactSheet.pdf

Brown Lerner and Brand (2006). The College Ladder: Linking Secondary and Postsecondary Success for All Students. American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved from: <http://www.aypf.org/publications/The%20College%20Ladder/TheCollegeLadderlinkingsecondaryandpostsecondaryeducation.pdf>

The College Board (2011). The College Completion Agenda 2011 Progress Report. Retrieved from: http://completionagenda.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/reports_pdf/Progress_Report_2011.pdf

Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce (2011). The College Payoff: Executive Summary. Retrieved from: <http://cew.georgetown.edu/collegepayoff>

Grodsky and Jones (2004). Real and Imagined Barriers to College Entry: Perceptions of Cost. Retrieved from: <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/7v87v3j0>

Henderson and Mapp (2002). A New Wave of Evidence. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Retrieved from: <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>

Institute for Higher Education Policy (2010). A Portrait of Low-Income Young Adults in Education. Retrieved from: [http://www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/m-r/\(Brief\)_A_Portrait_of_Low-Income_Young_Adults_in_Education.pdf](http://www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/m-r/(Brief)_A_Portrait_of_Low-Income_Young_Adults_in_Education.pdf)

National Mentoring Partnership (2012). The Value of Mentoring. Retrieved from: http://www.mentoring.org/about_mentor/value_of_mentoring

New York City Department of Education (2011). Graduation Totals and High School Progress Reports. Retrieved from: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/GraduationDropoutReports/default.htm>

New York State Board of Regents (2010). A New Standard for Proficiency: College Readiness. Retrieved from: http://usny.nysed.gov/A_New_Proficiency_Public_Version07_22.pdf

New York State Education Department (2011). English Language Arts and Mathematics Aspirational Performance Measures (APM), District Results by All Students. Retrieved from: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/statistics/hsgrads/2011/rpt_district_elamathAPM_allstudents.pdf

US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2010). Retrieved from: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_10_1YR_S0201&prodType=table

US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2010). Retrieved from: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_10_5YR_DP02&prodType=table

US Census Bureau (2010). United States Census 2010. Retrieved from: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_DP_DPDP1&prodType=table

US Census Bureau (2012). Educational Attainment in the United States: 2009. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p20-566.pdf>

-
- i According to the NYC Department of Education (2010), the total cohort in the Bronx class of 2010 was 15,579 students. Of those students, 9215 graduated by August of 2010, a rate of 59.2%. An additional 1% of graduates would be approximately 156 students. $156 \text{ students} * \$331,000 = \$51,636,000$. 10% more graduates would be approximately 1558 students. $1558 * \$331,000 = \$515,698,000$.
- ii According to the US Census American Community Survey (2010), there are 857,048 adults age 25 and over living in the Bronx. Of those adults, 11% have bachelor's degrees. An additional 1% of adults would be approximately 8570. $8570 * \$964,000 = \$8,261,480,000$.