INDIANA UNIVERSITY
PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE
Center for Research on Inclusion & Social Policy

EVALUATION OF THE JOHN BONER NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS' FULL SERVICE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROGRAM

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AUTHORS

Rebecca Nannery, Senior Policy Analyst
Kristi Schultz, Policy Analyst
Elizabeth Thuranira, Program Analyst
Nidhi Arun, Program Analyst
Jeramy Townsley, Statistician
Rachell Peña, Program Analyst
Jamie Palmer, Senior Policy Analyst

EDITOR

Elizabeth J. Van Allen, Technical Writer

DESIGNERS

Claire Menard, Graphic Designer
Medhavi Thakur, Graphic Designer
Emanuel Vargas, Student Research Assistant

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE
Center for Research on Inclusion & Social Policy

719 Indiana Avenue, Suite 302
Indianapolis, IN 46202
go.iu.edu/CRISP

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Education's (DOE) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education created the Full Service Community Schools (FSCS) grant to support planning and implementation of full service community schools across the country. Full service community schools build on the community schools model by making schools a central service hub within the community. This is accomplished through the utilization of strong partnerships and community collaboration to meet community needs.

DOE awarded the John Boner Neighborhood Centers (JBNC) an FSCS grant in 2019 to implement the FSCS model in three schools within the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS). JNBC later expanded the model to include two more schools. JBNC served as the backbone organization of the FSCS program and collaborated with the schools and community partners to improve outcomes for students and their families. The Center for Research on Inclusion and Social Policy (CRISP) worked with JBNC to provide an implementation and outcome evaluation of the FSCS program.

The community schools model

The community schools model (Figure 1) aims to make it easier for community members to engage with services by reducing barriers. The model is based on the concept that schools play a central role in addressing community members' needs beyond their traditional educational scope. It acknowledges that historical under appreciation of neighborhoods perpetuates education, healthcare, workforce development, and income inequities in areas with more people facing economic hardship or exclusion. Although the details of implementing the community schools model vary according to specific community needs, four pillar objectives form the program's foundation and are critical to community school success (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. Four pillars of the community schools model

Pillar 1: Integrated student supports.

- Provision of wraparound services to address needs outside of the classroom.
- Encourages improved school attendance, academic achievement, and positive behavior.

Pillar 2: Expanding learning time and opportunities.

- Facilitating activities outside of school time to enrich and extend classroom learning.
- Promote positive effects in student engagement, educational attainment, attendance, and school behaviors.

Pillar 3: Family and community engagement.

- Emphasis on active family and community participation and collaboration.
- Connects families with resources and with other families in the community.

Pillar 4: Collaborative leadership and practices.

- Increase collaboration between all groups within the community school.
- Fosters sustainability of organizational and structures to improve community outcomes.

For the community schools model, educators and community partners provide vital services for children and their parents or caregivers in and out of school. These services strengthen protective factors—characteristics, resources, and environmental factors that reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes, lower risks, and support healthy development for students and their families from early childhood into adulthood. Because the model focuses on caregivers and children, it is often described as a two-generational approach.

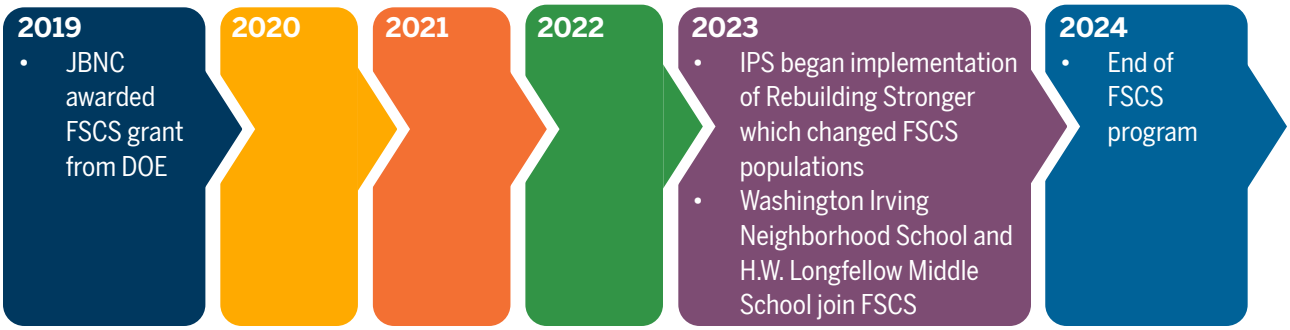
JBNC FSCS program

Target population

Implemented from 2019 to 2024, the FSCS program served children and families at early childhood education (ECE) centers and five IPS schools in the Near Eastside and Fountain Square neighborhoods of Indianapolis. Families of students attending FSCS schools were eligible to receive services from JBNC and its community partners by connecting with JBNC staff members integrated into the school setting. Students and their families can participate in programs and services in and out of the school environment.

JBNC's FSCS program established goals related to academic success, family engagement and stability, family health and wellness, and the creation of a culture promoting systems and policy change among IndyEast Achievement Zone (IEAZ) partners (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. Key elements of JBNC's FSCS program



Participating IPS Schools

- Thomas Gregg Neighborhood School
- Brookside School 54
- H.L. Harshman Middle School
- H.W. Longfellow Middle School
- Washington Irving Neighborhood School

FSCS Goals

Goal A:	Goal B:	Goal C:	Goal D:
Develop and implement high-quality programs to ensure academic success in early childhood and among school age children.	Develop and implement family and community engagement programming and supports to ensure financial and social stability and high levels of engagement among families.	Develop and implement services and supports to ensure a high degree of health and wellness among families of students attending the five community schools and their families.	Develop and implement a culture promoting systems and policy change among IEAZ partners using the Community School Systems Standards.

IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION RESULTS

For the implementation evaluation, CRISP researchers focused on observed fidelity to the program model, the impact of collaboration on program implementation and effectiveness, and the participants' perceptions of service accessibility and quality. They utilized responses from surveys and interviews with caregivers, JBNC staff, school staff, and key community partners to draw conclusions related to program implementation.

Collaboration

The research team surveyed and interviewed JBNC FSCS staff and community partners involved in FSCS program implementation to understand each group's experiences with collaboration during the grant period. Knowledge of the FSCS program and its goals varied among school staff and partner respondents. Fifty percent of partner survey respondents were unfamiliar with the term "FSCS", despite their partnership with JBNC in providing services related to the FSCS program. Compared to the community partners who were interviewed, school staff were more familiar with the FSCS program, noting that their schools' prior adoption of the community schools model facilitated their collaboration on the JBNC FSCS program. These differences in awareness and alignment may have been reflected in community partner, school staff, and JBNC staff perceptions about collaboration effectiveness.

The effectiveness of the collaboration also depended on clear communication between all parties involved. Survey respondents and interviewees thought more steady levels of communication between JBNC staff, community partners, and schools would have been helpful, although some JBNC staff and community partner survey respondents felt communication was adequate for effective programming.

School staff and community partner interviewees identified elements of effective partnerships, including transparency, accountability, and collaborative decision making. Respondents felt that establishing a feedback loop between FSCS program leadership, schools, and community partners would help to improve resource allocation, establish roles, and ensure accountability to the community.

When asked to identify any improvements due to the FSCS program, JBNC staff and community partners agreed that partnerships improved their organization's ability to serve FSCS participants. FSCS programming increased the number of students and families to whom they could deliver services. Access to staff professional development resources also improved. Both JBNC staff and community partners felt FSCS collaboration enhanced their ability to attain organizational goals and provide quality services to program participants.

Although community partners and JBNC staff agreed on numerous collaboration-related items, responses varied regarding the consistency of JNBC partner meetings. JBNC staff felt partner meetings were held consistently while partners wished these were more consistent. Similarly, some community partners felt they would have benefited from greater clarity initially regarding their roles and responsibilities in FSCS programming. Other community partners expressed appreciation for JBNC's willingness to accept and implement their feedback to improve the collaboration among all parties. For example, JNBC responded to the partners' feedback and clarified community partners' roles and responsibilities. JNBC redefined and adjusted those roles throughout the grant program as needed. Interviewees also expressed the desire to be more involved in decision making from the program's initiation to ensure greater buy-in from all involved parties.

Implementation fidelity

Programming and services

Consistent with the FSCS model, the participating FSCS schools adopted similar programming, although unique needs of each school's population resulted in some variation. This programming included attendance campaigns, family engagement events, food and nutrition access, tutoring, and social-emotional learning.

Implementation facilitators

Survey and interview respondents identified the JBNC-support roles and partnerships as critical facilitators to FSCS program implementation. Respondents noted JBNC family navigators and community school coordinators were fundamental to student, family, and service provider engagement. Additionally, strong partnerships between JBNC, schools, and community partner organizations increased school capacity to provide services that met student and family needs.

Implementation challenges

Survey and interview respondents also identified challenges to FSCS program implementation. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed FSCS program implementation and disrupted JBNC, school, and community partner connections. Once programming began in schools, school staff respondents noted that FSCS partners started shifting programming to meet the emerging student and family needs more directly. However, this was a challenge when schools did not have access to relevant service providers. Additionally, survey and interview respondents noted that while partnerships facilitated FSCS implementation, they also experienced typical collaborative challenges , such as when FSCS partners' program roles and goals did not align.

OUTCOME EVALUATION RESULTS

The FSCS outcome evaluation findings align with the four FSCS logic model domain areas, including. early childhood outcomes, student outcomes, family outcomes, and culture outcomes. Researchers utilized IPS student data and JBNC adult program data for the statistical analyses, as well as findings from caregiver, JBNC staff, and organizational partner surveys.

Early childhood education outcomes

JBNC was instrumental in ensuring that ECE staff members received the professional development necessary to provide high-quality childcare to young children. It also played a role in the implementation of the Ages and Stages questionnaire (ASQ) in partner ECE centers. Outcomes related to ECE could not be linked to FSCS programming because data sharing implementation between JBNC and the ECE centers is ongoing. When this important step is completed, it will be possible to test the connection of the outcomes of young children to the families community schools serve.

Student outcomes

CRISP researchers compared the academic and attendance outcomes of students attending FSCS schools to those of students who attended comparison, non-FSCS schools. Models that predicted changes in ILEARN math and English language arts (ELA) scores showed statistical significance and had some statistically significant predictors. However, these predictors—including attending an FSCS school—explained little of the change in test scores. A statistical model testing changes in student absences from school had similar results.

This indicates that IPS data did not capture the biggest drivers of changes in ILEARN scores and student absences. One possible explanation is that COVID-19 affected student outcomes nationwide, and many schools received assistance to reverse its effects on student outcomes, resulting in a complex interplay of resources available to students. Another possibility is that analysis of a longer time period would result in different results. Additionally, the IPS Rebuilding Stronger initiative to expand opportunities and diminish inequities across the school district impacted the student populations of two FSCS schools and may have made it difficult to tease out what factors affected student outcomes in these schools.

Family outcomes

The limited number of participant cases did not allow the CRISP researcher to test whether specific JBNC programs related significantly to family outcomes. However, variables connected to employment changes and childcare self-sufficiency predicted income-related self-sufficiency outcomes among FSCS program participants.

Caregivers survey respondents reported that FSCS programming provided a better understanding of their children's behavior changes related to physical and mental health. Half of the caregiver survey respondents who participated in Parent Café workshops indicated that they helped them develop new relationships with other families, and three-quarters agreed that these workshops helped them improve their parenting skills.

Culture outcomes

JBNC staff and community partner surveys and interviews of school staff and community partners revealed that the partnerships established during FSCS implementation allowed them to meet FSCS student and family needs more proactively

and effectively. JBNC staff and community partners believed that FSCS partnerships contributed to community recognition of their schools as places where students and their families can connect to a broad array of services.

The integration of JBNC staff in community schools aided in the connection of the schools to community partners. Continued communication, role definition, and shared decision making about the program's direction will further strengthen the community schools model in the Near Eastside of Indianapolis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation and outcome evaluation suggests several recommendations for future practice. These recommendations build on existing systems and align with the core pillars of the community schools model.

Prioritize and practice collaborative leadership and decision making

Program leadership should continue to prioritize and practice collaborative leadership with all partners to ensure shared accountability and allow for further tailoring of the program to meet community needs. Demonstrating this priority requires clear actions, such as early and frequent partner engagement, clear definitions of roles and responsibilities, and enhanced and systematized opportunities for feedback among all partners.

Maintain the integration of JBNC-supported roles

Feedback from school staff and community partners highlighted the importance of the JBNC support roles, specifically the family navigators and community school coordinators. FSCS program leadership should continue and expand support for these critical roles to maintain student and family engagement. Additionally, continuing to prioritize the hiring or training of bilingual staff can ensure the program can better serve diverse communities.

Connect programming to the community

During the grant period, students and families experienced shifting needs due to events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. School staff and community partner interviewees indicated that close relationships with students and families facilitated understanding and addressing these emerging needs. The FSCS program must expand engagement with students and families through a variety of methods to build authentic, trusting relationships that can allow the FSCS program to continue to address community needs and goals.

Strengthen and support partnerships

Program leadership must foster transparent connections between FSCS leadership, schools, and community partners to build trust and collaboration. Interview respondents suggested that this goal could be accomplished, in part, by establishing a regular meeting schedule for partners and focusing on active and useful sessions where individuals can share best practices and success stories to facilitate peer learning.

Finally, it may be helpful for the FSCS program leadership to create an inventory of partner data. This inventory will allow FSCS leadership to identify programming gaps and successes, enhancing an understanding of how program components may impact overall effectiveness. Additionally, community partners may experience benefits through data sharing, such as resource sharing and expanded connections.

PART 1.
INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

Over half of U.S. school children live in low-income households in areas of concentrated disadvantage and with limited access to essential learning opportunities. Youth from low-income families have fewer family resources and opportunities for early education, after-school programming, and summer courses.[1,2,3] Children in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty are also at higher risk of food insecurity, housing instability, and inadequate healthcare. According to the Learning Policy Institute, which conducts independent, high-quality research to improve education policy and practice, chronic stress resulting from the aforementioned risks can negatively impact students' readiness to learn and overall academic success. These risks can perpetuate academic inequities in educational outcomes between students with varying incomes.[3]

The community schools model is an overarching framework based on the concept that schools can play a central role in addressing community needs beyond their traditional educational scope.[4] Compared to a traditional social services approach, the community schools model intentionally aims to reduce barriers to accessing and receiving services. With work or school, coordinating appointments for these services for their children or themselves often challenges caregivers. The community schools model effectively supports students and families all year—when school is in and out of session—by developing partnerships with various local service providers.[3]

The community schools model acknowledges persistent types of neighborhood disinvestment perpetuate education, healthcare, workforce development, and income inequities in areas with more people facing economic hardship or exclusion.[3,5] Thus, it is designed first to improve access to high-quality schools. The model then incorporates ways to integrate the academic, health, social, youth, and community development and engagement services children and families need to succeed in those schools.[3,6]

Four pillars of the community schools model

Community schools vary widely because each school addresses context-specific local needs. A Learning Policy Institute report that reviewed what makes community schools an effective school improvement strategy identified four common features or pillars—(1) integrated student supports, (2) expanded learning time and opportunities, (3) family and community engagement, and (4) collaborative leadership—critical to their success (Figure 3). The authors' extensive review of research shows that the combination of these elements creates the conditions that support student and family success and improve student learning.[3]

FIGURE 3. The four pillars of the community schools model

Pillars of the community schools model			
Pillar 1 • Integrated student supports.	**Pillar 2** • Expanding learning time and opportunities.	**Pillar 3** • Family and community engagement.	**Pillar 4** • Collaborative leadership and practices.

Integrated student supports

The first pillar—integrated student supports—focuses on providing an array of individualized, culturally competent, and locally resourced services to students. These supports, sometimes called wraparound services, must address needs outside the classroom. They need to include mental, physical, and dental health; trauma-informed care; family counseling; housing;

nutrition and food access; and transportation. To be most effective, these services must fully integrate family perspectives. In addition, the relationships and coordination among the school and local partners must be strong.[3,7,8]

Research suggests that positive academic and nonacademic school outcomes result from providing students with these services. For example, the authors of an article that assessed integrated student supports synthesized 11 program evaluation studies and found these supports improved attendance, school progress, academic achievement (math, reading, and grade point average [GPA]), school attachment, and school behavior.[3,9] Additionally, integrating these supports in schools may increase student access to and participation in healthcare services, improving overall student health and well-being. Parents and caregivers may benefit from this integration by taking less time away from work with student appointments for these services.

Expanded learning time and opportunities

The second pillar of the model—expanded learning time and opportunities (ELT/O)—refers to activities that occur outside of the traditional academic school day. These opportunities can include before- and after-school programming, summer opportunities, and activities during other school-year breaks to enrich and extend classroom learning and provide students with continuity of support. Often informal, these opportunities may include sports, music, art, project-based learning, and experiential learning/apprenticeships. These activities are particularly beneficial for students attending schools in under resourced communities. The administration and faculty of these schools may feel systemic pressure to focus primarily on advancing skills aligning with state standardized testing during regular school hours. Low-income students also generally do not have the same access to these enrichment activities as higher-income students. By offering ELT/O with community partners, students can become involved in experiences that improve their academic, social, emotional, and physical development.[3]

Effective implementation of ELT/O requires intentional efforts to develop opportunities that align with student and family needs. When implemented appropriately, participation in summer and after-school programs and extracurricular activities have shown significant positive effects on student engagement, educational attainment, attendance, and school behaviors. Program rigor, quality, and intensity; the degree of student participation; and fidelity of implementation—the extent to which actual implementation aligns with intended implementation—are crucial to program effectiveness.[3,10]

Family and community engagement

The third pillar—family and community engagement—recognizes diverse family arrangements and emphasizes active family and community participation and collaboration. Effective family and community engagement programs are a core feature of a community school. They include school-related supports at home (i.e., homework help), a home/school feedback loop, family and community participation in various school events, volunteering in school, and family- and community-led events.[3] Family and community engagement programs also may involve a school resource center that connects families to needed resources and other families in the community.

Strong family and community engagement is associated with academic progress, student-reported school climate improvement, and reduced absenteeism. It more broadly connects to healthy student development and positive changes in social behavior. Such engagement can lower the incidence of community violence and address issues related to housing, food, and personal finances.[3,11,12] According to an article by Bryk, et al. on organizing schools for improvement, strong family and community engagement has "its most direct effects on conditions for learning such as increased trust, student perceptions of positive school environments, and healthy relationships with adults." Improved academic outcomes, reduced absenteeism, and longer-term academic success are indirect impacts.[3,13]

Collaborative leadership and practice

The fourth pillar of the model is collaborative leadership and practice. Increased effective collaboration between all participants (school staff, community organization staff, students, and families) within the community school forms the core tenant of this pillar. Improved collaboration may impact the sustainability of organizational structures and school governance practice, shared decision making, and accountability. When executed well, research indicates that collaborative leadership within community schools supports the necessary conditions for improving student outcomes and fostering relationships within the school and the broader community. Strong relationships and collaboration cultivate increased commitment and investment among stakeholders, leading to increases in social capital and teacher capacity.[3,14]

In practice, collaborative leadership involves stakeholder groups coming together in different ways. For example, shared decision making among school professionals (principals, teachers, and staff) may focus on addressing problems, setting goals, implementing new programs, and ensuring the appropriate integration of curriculum and instructional practices. Community schools may recruit family members to join leadership and decision making teams within the school. This strategy helps mobilize assets and resources within the community and build trusting relationships with students and families. Finally, schools also partner with community organizations to gain further insight and assistance in identifying pressing community issues. Within these partnerships, the collaborators can develop shared plans to address out-of-school factors that create barriers to learning, in addition to providing programming for integrated student supports and extended learning time and opportunities.[3,13,14]

Full Service Community Schools

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (DOE) created the Full Service Community Schools (FSCS) grant to support planning and implementation of full service community schools nationwide. Full service community schools build on the broader community schools model with additional specific and intentional efforts to center schools as community service hubs through robust community partnerships and collaboration.[15] The grant requires partnerships between local educational agencies (LEAs), community-based organizations, nonprofits, and other public/private entities. With these partnerships in place, FSCS aim to engage students and caregivers proactively in academic, health and wellness, and other social and economic services, in and out of the classroom.[16]

This comprehensive in-school and out-of-school approach brings together educators and community partners, such as higher education institutions, government health and social service agencies, community-based nonprofits, and faith-based organizations to provide services to children and their parents or caregivers.[17] This service provision to students and families simultaneously builds protective factors—conditions that mitigate risk and promote healthy development—to enhance student and family well-being on a cradle-to-career continuum.[17,18] Because it focuses on student and family well-being it frequently is referred to as a two-generation approach.

JOHN BONER NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

In 2019, DOE awarded John Boner Neighborhood Centers (JBNC) an FSCS grant to implement the FSCS model in three schools within the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) as part of the broader, ongoing Indy East Achievement Zone (IEAZ) initiative (Figure 4). Two more schools joined during the final grant year bringing the number up to five. The IEAZ initiative incorporates a two-generation approach to support children and families in the neighborhood through educational, economic, and social development services. JBNC serves as the backbone organization of the IEAZ initiative and collaborates with other organizations, such as other community centers, schools, governmental agencies, and local social service organizations, to improve educational outcomes.

FIGURE 4. Implementation overview of the JBNC FSCS program

JBNC FSCS goals

JBNC's implementation of the FSCS model specifically sought to promote student, family, and community engagement and success by offering wraparound services in a school and community setting. The organization's efforts aimed to address four main goals, which integrated the core tenets of the four community schools model pillars (Figure 5).

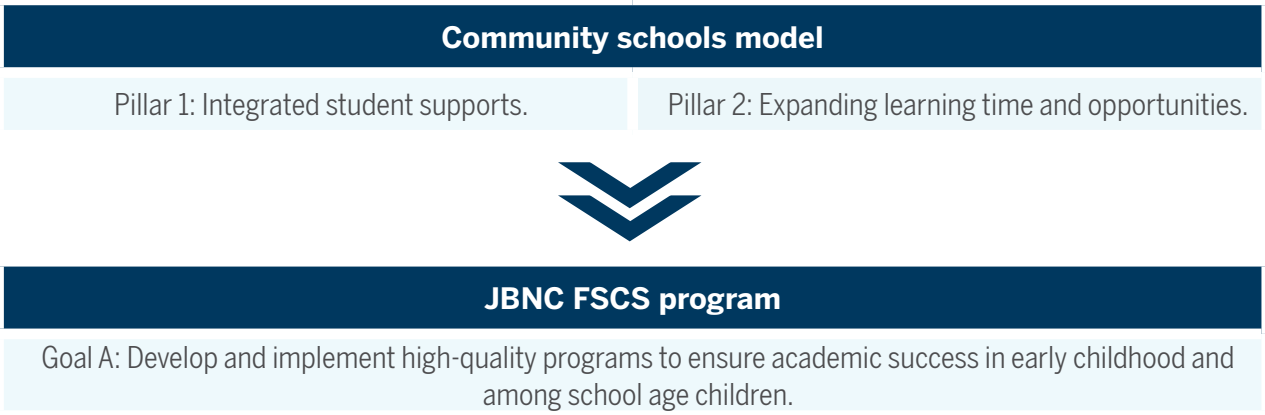
FIGURE 5. JBNC's Full Service Community School program goals

Goal A:	Goal B:	Goal C:	Goal D:
Develop and implement high-quality programs to ensure academic success in early childhood and among school age children.	Develop and implement family and community engagement programming and supports to ensure financial and social stability and high levels of engagement among families.	Develop and implement services and supports to ensure a high degree of health and wellness among families of students attending FSCS schools.	Develop and implement a culture promoting systems and policy change among IEAZ partners using the Community School Systems Standards.

Goal A

FSCS goal A was to develop and implement high-quality programs to ensure academic success in early childhood and among school-age children (Figure 6). To achieve this goal, JBNC, the participating schools, and community partners worked together to identify the educational needs of school-age children, provide professional development to ensure educators were well supported, and engage school-age children in robust in and out-of-school programming to ensure their holistic success. This goal incorporates Pillar 1, integrated student supports, and Pillar 2, expanding learning time and opportunities, from the community schools model.

FIGURE 6. JBNC FSCS goal A



Goal B

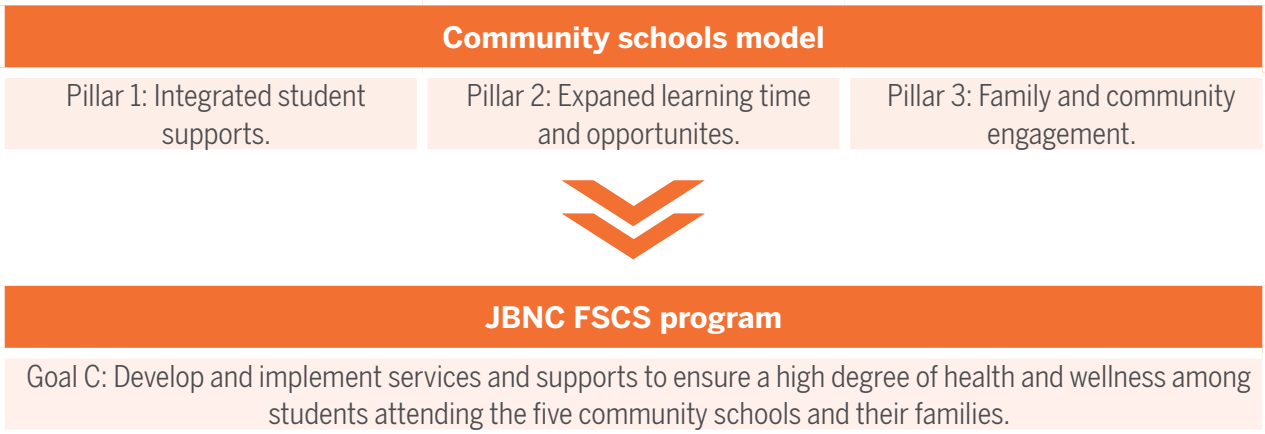
Goal B for this program involved developing and implementing family and community engagement programming and support to ensure families remain engaged and achieve financial and social stability (Figure 7). To accomplish this goal, families had the opportunity to engage in a variety of services the schools, JBNC, and community partners offered. These services included financial and workforce development, housing support, physical and mental healthcare, and parenting skills classes. This goal aligns with the Pillar 3 of the community schools model that addresses family engagement across several domains and building stronger relationships between caregivers and community entities.

FIGURE 7. JBNC FSCS goal B

Goal C

Goal C for this program was to develop and implement services and supports to ensure a high degree of health and wellness among community school students and their families (Figure 8). JBNC, schools, and community partners collaborated to provide low-barrier access to health and wellness services. This goal aligns with Pillars 1, 2, and 3, as it incorporates aspects of integrated student supports during and outside of school hours while ensuring family access to these services.

FIGURE 8. JBNC FSCS goal C



Goal D

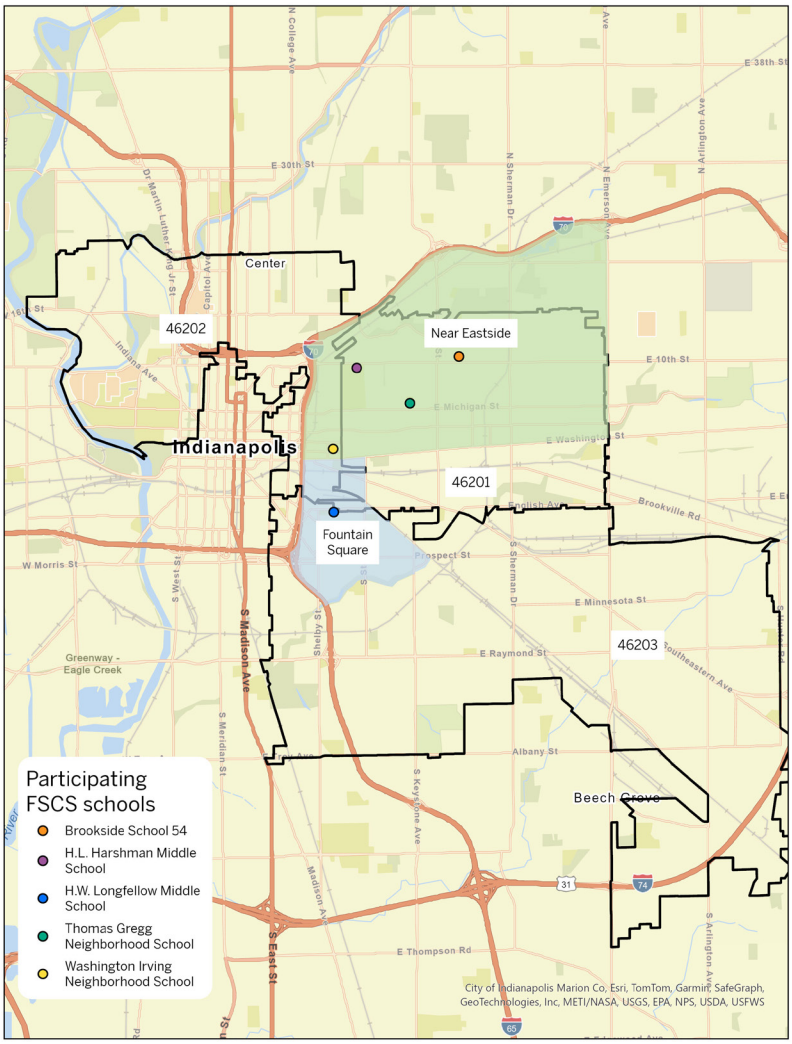
Goal D for this program was to develop and implement a culture promoting systems and policy change among IEAZ partners using the Institute for Educational Leadership's Community School Systems Standards (Figure 9). These standards include collaborative leadership and strategic capacity, strategic and accountable community partnerships, community and family engagement, data use and results, communications, supportive policy, and sustainable financing and resource development. All FSCS partners prioritized intentional project meetings and goal setting to shift their cultures to facilitate positive change. This goal aligns with Pillar 4, which encourages the development of collaborative leadership and practices within the community schools initiative.

FIGURE 9. JBNC FSCS goal D

JBNC FSCS target population

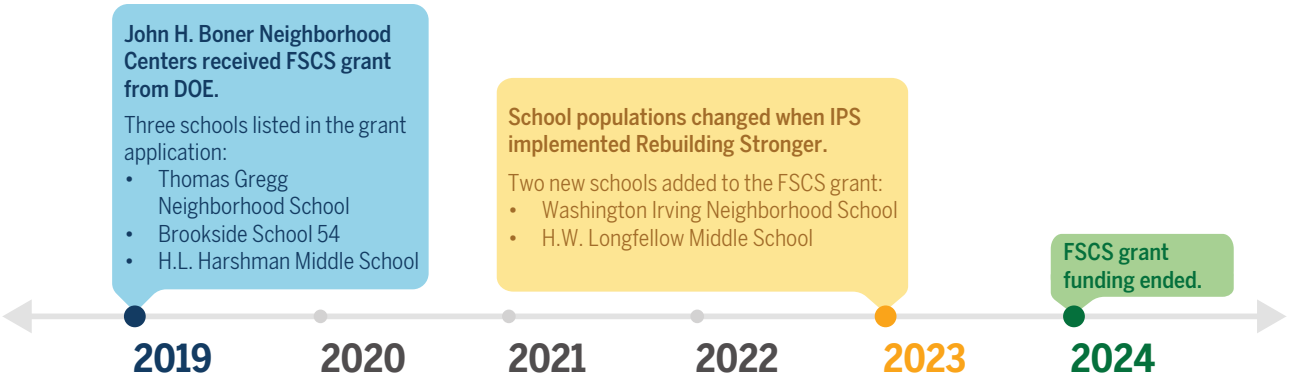
The JBNC FSCS program sought to serve students—ranging from early childhood to school age—who attended specified participating early childhood education centers and IPS schools. In addition to serving students, the JBNC FSCS program also included the families of students enrolled at participating schools in their target population. FSCS program implementation occurred across five IPS schools from 2019 to 2024. The participating schools were in the Near Eastside or Fountain Square neighborhoods in downtown Indianapolis, which fall within the confines of the 465-interstate loop (Figure 10). However, students attending these schools may not reside within these neighborhoods.

FIGURE 10. Map of FSCS schools



The initial implementation of the FSCS program started in three schools, Thomas Gregg Neighborhood School (Thomas Gregg), Brookside School 54 (Brookside), and H.L. Harshman Middle School (Harshman) in 2019 (Figure 11). During the 2023–24 school year, IPS implemented the Rebuilding Stronger Plan, an effort by the district to create more equitable and higher-quality schools across Indianapolis. As a result, Harshman remained in the FSCS program but transitioned to a high-ability and dual-language middle school serving students across the IPS district. Additionally, H.W. Longfellow Middle School (Longfellow) and Washington Irving Neighborhood School (Washington Irving) were added to the JBNC FSCS program services during this period to help maintain a pipeline of services for families.

FIGURE 11. Timeline of schools participating in FSCS program



The FSCS schools represent a variety of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. A majority of students enrolled in four of the schools were eligible for free or reduced lunches, with Harshman having the highest percentage (78%). Households must be at or below 130% of the federal poverty level (FPL) for students to be eligible for free lunch and between 130% and 185% of the FPL for reduced lunch (Table 1). This suggests that most students attending these schools reside in households aligned with these FPL income ranges. Additionally, the percentage of English language learners (ELL) varied between the schools. Harshman Middle School had the highest percentage at 44%. This information is critical, as ELL students may need additional support or face unique challenges.

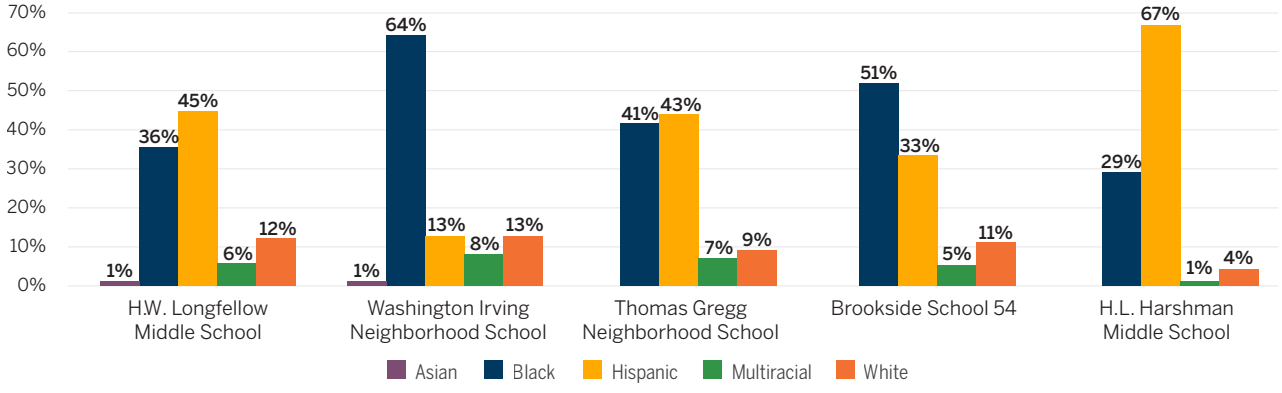
TABLE 1. Participating FSCS school characteristics, 2023–24 academic year[19,20]

SCHOOL NAME	ZIP CODE	GRADE LEVELS SERVED	ENROLLED STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH ELIGIBLE	PERCENTAGE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
Thomas Gregg Neighborhood School	46201	Pk–6	570	71%	32%
Brookside School 54	46201	Pk–6	415	57%	24%
Washington Irving Neighborhood School	46202	Pk–8	334	4%	10%
H.L. Harshman Middle School	46201	7–8	272	78%	44%
H.W. Longfellow Middle School	46203	7–8	463	73%	32%

Source: IPS data

The selected schools also represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the areas they serve (Figure 12). Across all schools, a majority of the students served were from historically excluded backgrounds.

FIGURE 12. Breakdown of racial demographics at participating FSCS schools, 2023–24 academic year[9]

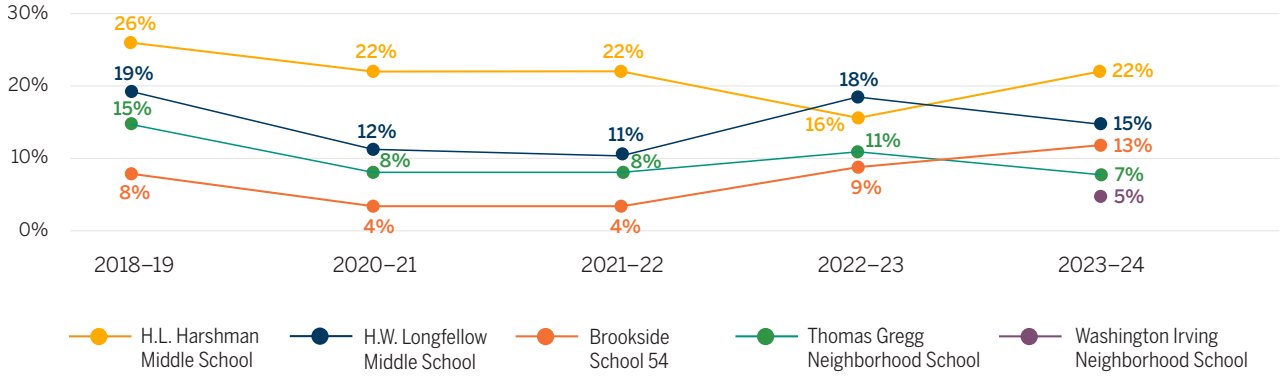


Source: IPS data

Figures 13 and 14 showcase the percentage of the student population proficient in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math according to Indiana's Learning Evaluation and Assessment Readiness Network (ILEARN) yearly assessment. Test scores for the 2019–20 academic year are unavailable due to the cancellation of standardized testing during the COVID-19 pandemic.[21] Additionally, IPS school consolidation and reopening made it impossible to retrieve scores for all schools.

The participating schools also display variance in their proficiency levels over time. Some of this variance may be attributed to IPS restructuring efforts as well as the lasting COVID-19 pandemic impacts. The percentage of ELA proficient students at Brookside increased from 8% during the 2018–19 school year to 13% during the 2023–24 academic year—the only FSCS school to show this net positive growth. However, Harshman still had the highest percentage of ELA proficient students, at 22%.

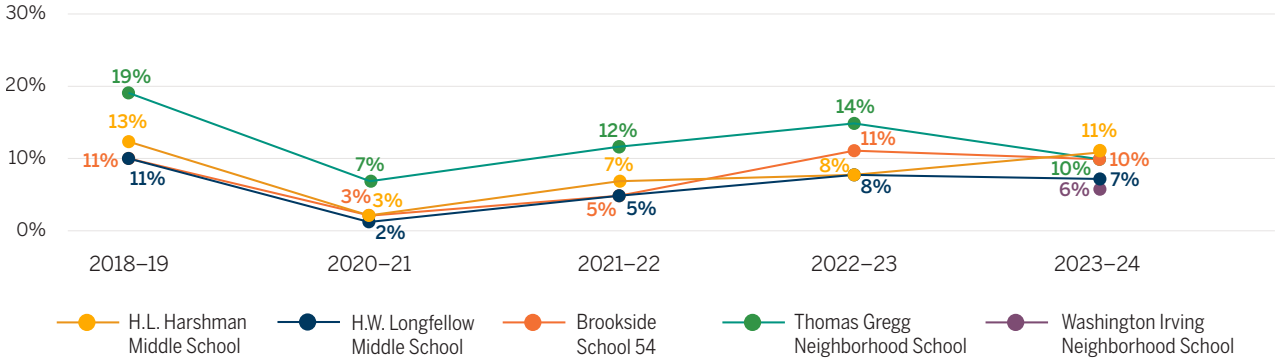
FIGURE 13. Percentage of student population with proficient ELA ILEARN scores[22]



Source: IPS data

All FSCS schools show a sharp decline in math proficiency during and after the COVID-19 pandemic compared to their 2018–19 academic year proficiency percentages. Proficiency percentages began to rise during the 2021–22 academic year, although no school returned to their pre-COVID proficiency levels during the observed period.

FIGURE 14. Percentage of student population with proficient Math ILEARN score[22]



Source: IPS data

Thomas Gregg Neighborhood School

Thomas Gregg Neighborhood School (Thomas Gregg) is located in the Near Eastside neighborhood of Indianapolis and the 46201 ZIP code. It participated in the FSCS grant program starting in 2019. The school serves students in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. For the 2023–24 school year, the school reported 570 enrolled students, with 51% male and 49% female students. Thomas Gregg students are racially diverse, with 43% reported as Hispanic, 41% Black, 9% white, and 7% two or more races. Seventy-one percent of the school population was eligible for free and/or reduced lunches.[19] Thirty-two percent of the school population was also reported to be English language learners.[20]

Brookside School 54

Brookside School 54 (Brookside) is located in the Near Eastside neighborhood of Indianapolis and the 46201 ZIP code. Brookside participated in the FSCS grant program starting in 2019. The school serves students in pre-kindergarten through

sixth grade. For the 2023–24 school year, the school reported 415 enrolled students, with 50% male and 50% female students. The majority (51%) of Brookside students were Black, while 33% were reported as Hispanic, 11% white, and 5% two or more races. Fifty-seven percent of the school population was eligible for free and/or reduced lunches.[19] Twenty-four percent of the school population was also reported to be English language learners.[20]

Washington Irving Neighborhood School

Washington Irving Neighborhood School (Washington Irving) is located in the Near Eastside neighborhood of Indianapolis and the 46202 ZIP code. It participated in the FSCS grant program starting in 2023. The school serves grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Washington Irving reported serving 334 students, with a 50/50 male-to-female ratio. The majority (64%) of students were Black, with 13% reported as Hispanic, 13% as White, and 8% as two or more races. Four percent of the school population was reported eligible for free or reduced lunches.[19] Ten percent were described as English language learners.[20]

H. L. Harshman Middle School

H.L. Harshman Middle School (Harshman) is located in the Near Eastside neighborhood of Indianapolis and the 46201 ZIP code. The school participated in the FSCS grant program starting in 2019. It serves students in seventh and eighth grade. For the 2023–24 school year, the school reported 272 enrolled students, with 55% male and 45% female students. The majority (67%) of Harshman students were Hispanic, while 29% were reported as Black, 4% white, 2% two or more races, and 1% multiracial. Seventy-eight percent of the school population was eligible for free and/or reduced lunches.[19] Forty-four percent of the school population was also reported to be English language learners.[20]

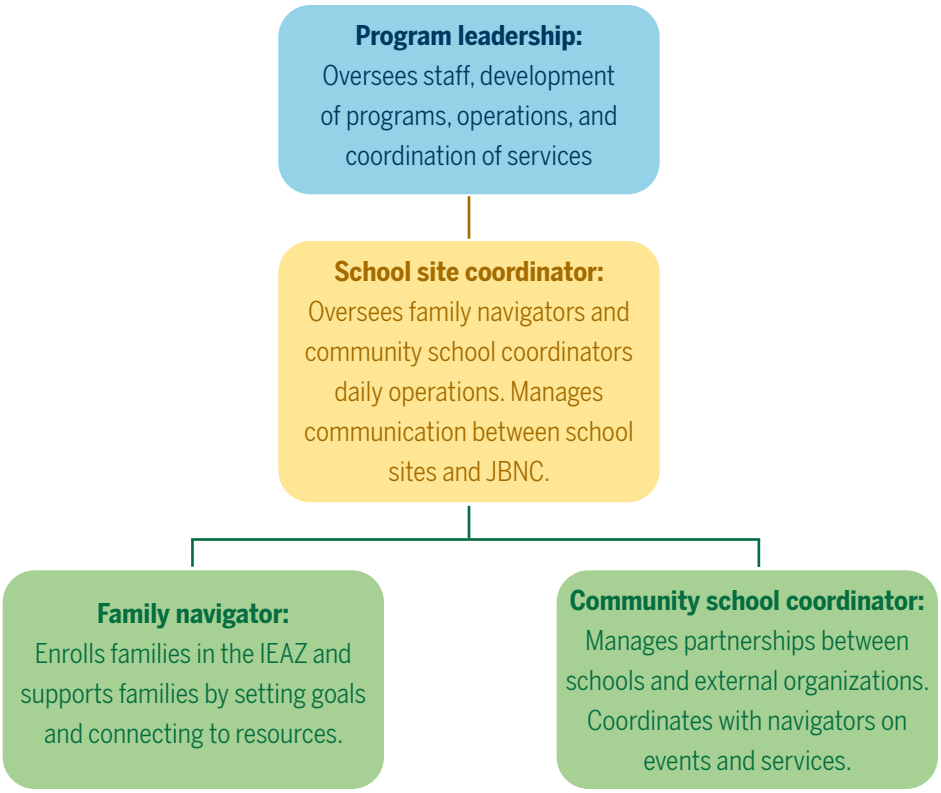
H.W. Longfellow Middle School

H.W. Longfellow Middle School (Longfellow) is located in the Fountain Square neighborhood of Indianapolis and the 46203 ZIP code. The school participated in the FSCS grant program starting in 2023. It serves students in seventh and eighth grade. For the 2023–24 school year, Longfellow reported 463 enrolled students, with approximately 50% male students and 50% female students. Forty-five percent of students were Hispanic, while 36% were reported as Black, 12% white, 6% two or more races, and 1% Asian. Seventy-three percent of the school population was eligible for free and/or reduced lunches.[19] Thirty-two percent of the school population was also reported to be English language learners.[20]

JBNC FSCS roles

Effective partnerships with families and the community are integral to the community schools model. To be effective, specific roles within the program must be filled to ensure that partnerships thrive, and connections are made between service partners and students and families.[23] There are four main staff roles within the JBNC FSCS program: program leadership, school site coordinator, community school coordinators, and family navigators (Figure 15). Individuals in these roles work together to carry out FSCS program activities and services in the schools and the community.

FIGURE 15. JBNC FSCS program roles



Strong program leadership is important within the community schools model. Program leaders connect partners and ensure they create and implement a shared vision. Their job encompasses the fourth pillar of the community schools model. When effective, the program leadership helps initiative members maintain focus, engage in shared decision making, and encourage their accountability to the community.[23]

The school site coordinator acted as a liaison between schools and JBNC, overseeing the needs and operations of the family navigators and community school coordinators. The individual in this role helps ensure that there is a direct link between school staff and program leadership.

Each participating school had community school coordinators who worked across all pillars of the community schools model. They managed partnerships with organizations that provided integrated supports and ELT/O for students and families. Research suggests that community school coordinators play a key role in leveraging assets and resources available in the community to improve student outcomes.[23] Community school coordinators engage parents, students, school staff, and community partners to ensure that all resources are focused on the shared vision of the project. They are essential for an effective community school.[3]

Family navigators worked on-site at FSCS schools—enrolling students and families in the IEAZ and providing targeted case management. Effective family navigators were critical to student and family outcomes, as they engaged directly with these groups and were responsible for building trust and engagement. Research suggests that having that trusted relationship can increase student and family engagement with other services. These relationships can also lead to additional positive outcomes.[1] Family navigators work with students and families to identify barriers and risks, set goals, and provide links to community resources. Their personal relationships with families also allow them to address specific concerns and follow up on progress at regular intervals. They serve as a bridge between families and partner organizations providing integrated student

supports—including social, health, nutrition, and mental health services—and other learning opportunities. Family navigators carry out the objectives of the first two pillars of the community schools model—integrated student supports and ELT/O.

JBNC FSCS program participant engagement process

Recruitment

Recruitment for the program happened through multiple touchpoints. Staff discussed the schools' app-based ticketing system, which was developed to streamline the referral process. All school staff, including teachers, administrative staff, and support staff, had access to the ticketing system and referred students and their families to JBNC FSCS staff members. When families were referred, family navigators contacted them to begin the intake process. Recruitment also occurred at school events. JBNC staff members provided families with information on FSCS services and activities. If families expressed interest in the program, a family navigator followed up to begin the intake process.

Enrollment

After expressing interest in the FSCS program, families scheduled a meeting with a family navigator to complete the intake process. The intake process included gathering demographic information, completing family needs assessments, and using a self-assessment matrix to set goals and identify family strengths and areas of need. These assessments considered such topics as parenting skills, financial and workforce development needs, educational goals, social supports, health and wellness, and other individual and family goals.

Post-enrollment communication

A key component of FSCS is ensuring consistent communication in FSCS-related activities and services. Family navigators maintained open communication with those enrolled in FSCS programming, which was critical to success. They checked in with families regularly to assess progress, address emergent needs, and messaged them about upcoming events and workshops. FSCS staff and partners often communicated with families during events. The FSCS staff provided flexible scheduling for events, offering families with various work arrangements opportunities to attend. Additionally, the program offered incentives, or barrier busters, such as on-site childcare or transportation assistance, to increase family engagement. These strategies helped FSCS staff stay in contact with FSCS students and families and ensured they remained actively engaged in the services they selected.

PART 2.
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOME EVALUATION

JBNC contracted the Indiana University Public Policy Institute's Center for Research on Inclusion and Social Policy (CRISP) to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the FSCS program in the selected public schools. Before the evaluation, the CRISP team collaborated with JBNC program leadership to develop a logic model for the FSCS program. This model served as a basis for understanding the program components and would be assessed continually throughout the grant period for needed updates.

A set of broad questions guided the implementation and outcome evaluations (Table 2). The implementation evaluation questions served as the foundation for understanding stakeholder experiences during the program. Researchers could comprehend barriers and facilitators to program implementation and program participants and collect contextual information to improve understanding of program fidelity. The outcome questions allowed the research team to identify participant trends encompassing the program's four main goals.

TABLE 2. Guiding evaluation questions

IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION QUESTIONS
To what extent are the services being implemented with fidelity to program design?
To what extent was collaboration among program partners effective, to achieve the goals of the program?
To what extent did participating families perceive the program to be accessible and of quality?
OUTCOME EVALUATION QUESTIONS
What trends in outcomes are assessed for participating families and students?
To what extent are various program components and participant characteristics associated with outcomes?

DATA SOURCES

CRISP utilized a variety of data sources (Table 3) to assess the effectiveness of the implementation and outcomes of JBNC's FSCS program. The research team utilized surveys, interviews, program data, and administrative data from defined points in time across the grant period to present an overall picture of JNBC and partners' implementation of FSCS by JBNC.

TABLE 3. Data sources

DATA SOURCE	COLLECTED BY	DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION
Caregiver survey and interviews	CRISP	Understand caregiver experience in the FSCS program and perception of impact	Implementation and outcome
Community partner survey and interviews	CRISP	Understand community partner experience and perception of collaboration during the FSCS grant period	Implementation and outcome
JBNC FSCS staff surveys	CRISP	Understand JBNC staff experience and perception of collaboration during the FSCS grant period.	Implementation and outcome
School staff interviews	CRISP	Understand school staff experience and perception of collaboration during the FSCS grant period.	Implementation and outcome

DATA SOURCE	COLLECTED BY	DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION
JBNC Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) program data	JBNC	Identify program predictors of improvements in participant outcomes.	Outcome
IPS student data	IPS	Identify trends in student academic performance.	Outcome
Administrative and program data	JBNC	Understand program background and context.	Implementation and outcome

Literature review

CRISP conducted a literature review to aid in the creation and refinement of the JBNC FSCS logic model. Additionally, the literature reviewed allowed CRISP to understand the connections between critical components of FSCS and the overarching program goals better.

Surveys

Caregiver survey

CRISP, in collaboration with JBNC program leadership, developed specific caregiver surveys for students' parents or caregivers at each of the FSCS schools. These surveys sought to understand their satisfaction with JBNC services, how they perceived services impacted their financial well-being, physical and mental health, and parenting skills. Additionally, this survey asked caregivers to detail what type of services their child(ren) participated in at and outside of school. Questions were designed to explore their perception of barriers to participation and the overall service impact. The overall goal of the caregiver survey was to understand service use and accessibility and use of services in addition to perceptions about service impact on caregivers and children.

Community partner survey

CRISP, in collaboration with JBNC program leadership, developed a community partner survey for individuals at organizations that worked closely with JBNC on the FSCS program. This survey sought to understand the variety of services these partners provided by these partners and how they worked with JBNC to achieve FSCS goals. Additionally, the survey focused on learning about JNBC's collaboration with these partners and investigated the frequency and quality of communication, challenges, and improvements seen during the grant period. Finally, the survey gauged community partners' perceptions of the program's impact. Specifically, respondents were asked to reflect on how the FSCS program impacted participants, as well as how it impacted their organization and the greater systems in which they work.

JBNC FSCS staff survey

CRISP, in collaboration with JBNC program leadership, developed a survey to understand the experiences of JBNC staff who worked directly on the FSCS program. The survey was designed to mirror the community partner survey, so that researchers could compare their perceptions of how well grant collaboration worked. This survey asked respondents about various aspects of collaborating with community partners, such as frequency and quality of communication, challenges, and improvements experienced throughout the grant period. Additionally, staff were asked about their perception of how the program impacted participants and how collaboration between organizations spurred greater systems change.

Interviews

Caregiver interviews

CRISP developed a semi-structured caregiver interview protocol. This protocol allowed researchers to understand more deeply the concepts covered in the caregiver survey, such as their level of engagement with FSCS programming, barriers and facilitators to participation, and perceived changes resulting from service participation.

Community partner interviews

CRISP developed a semi-structured community partner interview protocol. This protocol allowed researchers to understand more deeply the concepts covered in the community partner survey, such as how their organization became involved with the FSCS program, barriers and facilitators to implementation of their services, collaboration with JBNC, and the overall impact on participants, their organization, and other involved stakeholders.

School staff interviews

CRISP developed a semi-structured interview protocol for school staff and administrators. Researchers wanted to learn from select school staff members about their experiences collaborating on the FSCS grant program with JBNC and external partners. The interview protocol covered topics such as the school's motivation or perceived benefits from participating in FSCS, the school's experience collaborating with JBNC and other partners, the implementation of FSCS programming in the school, and finally the overall program impact on participants.

TABLE 4. Outcome measures

OUTCOME	MEASURE
ECE	
Improved developmental skills	Data unavailable
Improved kindergarten readiness	Data unavailable
Increased community collaboration	Data unavailable
Enhanced social-emotional learning and understanding	Data unavailable
Increased parental engagement with child development	Data unavailable
Students	
Increased school attendance	IPS data
Increased interest and engagement in STEM fields	Data unavailable
Improved performance in math and literacy at the grade level	IPS data
Improved social-emotional health and learning	Caregiver survey
Improved social capital	Caregiver survey
Increased peer support	Caregiver survey
Improved empowerment, sense of self, and access	Caregiver survey
Increased access to mental health and physical health treatment	ETO data
Improved awareness of nutrition and healthy foods	Caregiver survey
Improved grade transitions for students	IPS data
Improved parental social-emotional skills and supports	ETO data, caregiver survey
Family	
Increased income/reduced debt	ETO data
Improved financial stability	ETO data
Improved employment/job retention	ETO data
Increased peer networks	Caregiver survey
Increased social support	ETO data, caregiver survey
Improved civic engagement	ETO data, caregiver survey
Increased knowledge of community resources	Caregiver survey
Improved mental/physical health	ETO data, caregiver survey

OUTCOME	MEASURE
Enhanced utilization of mental/physical health services	ETO data
Increased parent/family engagement and retention	ETO data
Increased family engagement	ETO data
Increased housing stability	ETO data
Improved parenting skills	ETO data
Culture	
A culture of promoting systems	JBNC data, JBNC and community partner surveys
A culture of promoting policy change	JBNC data, JBNC and community partner surveys
Evaluation of FSCS program at participating schools	Not applicable

DATA COLLECTION FRAMEWORK

Eligibility

The eligibility requirements for each data collection method are detailed below in Table 5. Due to the large number of participants and community partners involved with the FSCS grant program, CRISP and JBNC collaborated to determine eligibility criteria for primary data collection, to ensure that the appropriate populations were included.

TABLE 5. Eligibility criteria by data collection tool

DATA COLLECTION TOOL	CRITERIA
Caregiver survey and interview	Parents and caregivers of children attending the five schools and receiving services through the FSCS program were eligible to receive and complete the survey. All caregivers who were eligible for the survey were also eligible to be interviewed. CRISP developed a sampling framework to guide caregiver recruitment and selection.
JBNC FSCS staff survey	Any JBNC staff members directly affiliated with or working on the FSCS grant program were eligible to receive and complete the survey.
School staff interview	CRISP researchers and JBNC staff determined a list of school staff/administrators at schools participating in the FSCS initiative. Staff at these schools working directly on or affiliated with the FSCS initiatives were eligible to participate in an interview or focus group. CRISP employed purposive sampling and selection to recruit specific individuals from partner organizations based on their roles and experiences working on the program.
Community partner survey and interviews	CRISP and JBNC staff identified a list of community program partners/organizations. Staff at these organizations working directly on or affiliated with the FSCS initiatives were eligible to respond to the survey or participate in an interview.

Sampling

CRISP and JBNC collaboratively developed sampling frameworks for each group to be interviewed. These frameworks guided the recruitment and selection process for interviews and ensured that a diverse range of experiences were captured, despite the relatively small number of interviews conducted.

Caregiver interview

CRISP and JBNC leadership collaboratively developed a sampling framework to guide caregiver recruitment and selection for interviews (Table 6). This framework included five main categories as well as variable characteristics for each. These categories were chosen to ensure that caregivers selected for an interview represented a variety of experiences and provided a more complete picture of those who participated in FSCS programming.

TABLE 6. Caregiver interview sampling framework

CATEGORY	CHARACTERISTIC
School child is enrolled at	• Thomas Gregg Neighborhood School • Brookside School 54 • H.L. Harshman Middle School • H.W. Longfellow Middle School • Washington Irving Neighborhood School
Level of engagement	• Low (showed up to school event, engaged once) • High (Housing Stability for Student Success families, engagement with family navigators, engagement with attendance campaign)
Length of engagement	• One semester • Two semesters or more
Types of services received	• Financial • Health/wellness • Parenting • Career
Personal characteristics	• Age • Racial • Socioeconomic • Education level

Community partner interview sampling

CRISP and JBNC leadership collaboratively developed a sampling framework to guide community partner recruitment and selection for interviews (Table 7). This framework included four main categories, as well as variable characteristics for each. These categories were chosen to ensure that community partners selected for an interview represented a variety of partner and collaboration experiences.

TABLE 7. Community partner interview sampling framework

CATEGORY	CHARACTERISTIC
Type of service/programming provided by organization	• Health/wellness • Parent training/workshops • Food banks • Early childhood education • After-school programming • Community centers
Level of engagement	• Low • High
Length of time affiliated with FSCS	• Less than 1 year • 1 year • 2 years • Between 2 and 5 years • More than 5 years
# of schools engaged	• 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

School staff interview sampling

CRISP and JBNC leadership collaboratively developed a sampling framework to guide recruitment and selection of school staff for interviews (Table 8). This framework included four main categories as well as variable characteristics for each. These categories were chosen to ensure that school staff selected for an interview represented a variety of partner and collaboration experiences.

TABLE 8. School staff interview sampling framework

CATEGORY	CHARACTERISTIC
School	• Thomas Gregg Neighborhood School • Brookside School 54 • H.L. Harshman Middle School • H.W. Longfellow Middle School • Washington Irving Neighborhood School
Level of engagement	• Low • High
Individual roles	• Teacher • School social worker • School administrator/principal
Length of time in role	• Less than 1 year • 1 year • 2 years • Between 2 and 5 years • More than 5 years

Recruitment

Survey recruitment

JBNC staff recruited survey participants via email. CRISP provided JBNC staff with email recruitment language and flyers, which were distributed along with the survey link. Interested participants clicked on the Qualtrics link in the recruitment email and consented electronically to participate.

Interview recruitment

JBNC staff initially recruited interview participants via email and copied CRISP staff. CRISP provided JBNC staff with language recruitment and an interview scheduling link to include in their email. Interested participants clicked the scheduling link in the recruitment email and provided contact information. CRISP staff then reached out to confirm and schedule an interview.

Response rates

The research team provided JBNC staff with survey and interview distribution guides. To gain as many responses as possible, both guides detailed when to send the initial distribution emails, each of the follow-up emails as needed, and the final reminder emails.

Survey response rates

Per the survey distribution guide, JBNC staff initially distributed each of the surveys to caregivers, community partners, and JBNC staff on November 22nd. A follow-up email was sent to all survey respondents on November 27th. JNBC staff sent a final follow-up email on December 5th.

Due to an insignificant change in the number of responses following the final email on December 5th, the research team closed the partner survey on December 9th, totaling 16 days with a 10% response rate (Figure 9). The JBNC staff survey was officially closed on December 12th, totaling 19 days with a 24% response rate. To gain as many responses as possible, the

research team kept the caregiver surveys open until December 20th, totaling 27 days with an overall response rate of 5%. The caregiver survey response rate can be further broken down by language—the response rate for the English version of the caregiver survey was 8%, with the Spanish version at 1%.

TABLE 9. Survey response rates

SURVEY NAME	RESPONSE RATE
Caregiver survey (combined)	5%
Community partner survey	10%
JBNC staff survey	24%

Interview response rates

JBNC staff sent the initial interview distribution emails to caregivers, community partners, and school staff on November 22nd and copied the research team. The research team then sent an initial follow-up email on November 25th to begin scheduling interviews. Team members continued to send follow-up emails through December 13th and completed the interviews on December 16th for analysis.

Although the research team could not conduct enough caregiver interviews to include an analysis of them while maintaining confidentiality in the report, 25 community partners received interview request emails, and three participated (Table 10). Nine school staff received interview request emails, and three of them were interviewed.

TABLE 10. Interview response rates

SURVEY NAME	RESPONSE RATE
Community partner interviews	12%
School staff interviews	33%

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

CRISP researchers interviewed school staff and community partners to understand their awareness of the FSCS grant program goals and what their experiences were partnering with JBNC and other organizations to provide services and programming. They also included questions to investigate their perceptions of how the FSCS grant program impacts students, families, and the community. CRISP researchers interviewed three school staff members and three community partners, whose experiences and feedback are represented throughout this report.

Of the individuals interviewed by CRISP researchers, most held leadership positions at the school or organizational level. They were primarily responsible for the operational management of programming and the FSCS grant program, rather than for direct service delivery. Their roles involved overseeing partnerships, ensuring program quality, and aligning programming with the school's needs. Interviewees provided valuable insight into the implementation of the grant, including facilitators and barriers to effective partnerships and the benefits of the community school model for students, families, and communities. Additionally, school staff indicated that they had been with the schools before the FSCS grant, which may have given them a deeper understanding of the school's context and community needs.

However, the perspectives of those in non-administrative roles, such as teachers, school social workers, or other frontline staff, are missing from these interviews. As a result, there may be gaps in understanding how the grant functioned from the perspective of those who interact most frequently or directly with students, families, and community members. Including their feedback would have elucidated how the grant functioned at the community level, particularly in terms of outreach

efforts, how communities engaged with programs and services, and any additional support that staff might have needed to support the model effectively.

CRISP researchers engaged in thematic analysis of interviews conducted with caregivers, community partners, and school staff. Interviews were transcribed using transcription software. Then, a research team member reviewed the transcript for accuracy. Researchers utilized Braun and Clarkes' six-step process for qualitative thematic analysis as a guide for the transcript analysis.[24] Researchers initially reviewed each transcript to generate preliminary insights and documented potential data-derived codes. Then, researchers developed a codebook through inductive and deductive methods that guided the coding of the interview transcripts. Multiple team members manually coded the transcripts and reviewed interpretations to ensure inter-coder reliability. Analysis of the coded interviews revealed emerging themes and key findings. Researchers practiced reflexivity throughout the coding process, which involves the researcher reflecting actively on how their own positionality, biases, and assumptions may impact their data.[25]

Researchers also engaged in content analysis of program and administrative notes and artifacts. This analysis aided in understanding the implementation of FSCS and the context around shifts in the implementation plan.

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

JBNC staff and community partner surveys

Researchers disseminated a survey that assessed the quality and frequency of collaboration between JBNC and its partners in the FSCS grant program. CRISP downloaded and cleaned aggregate results from the staff and partner surveys to exclude respondents who completed less than 20% of the survey questions. Researchers chose this as a cutoff because the first 20% survey questions collected basic consent and role information. They also excluded surveys in which respondents declined to participate. Questions were then classified based on the type of information they intended to collect. The team analyzed the staff and partner surveys responses for these classifications together in Excel, using descriptive statistical functions. Researchers then wrote findings based on this analysis.

The community partner survey received 12 responses, of which six were complete and could be used to gain insights regarding FSCS partnerships. Community partner survey respondents represented various organizations, including healthcare services, faith-based service providers, and organizations that provide targeted learning programs. Community partner survey respondents also represented a variety of roles within their organizations—two reported their roles as front-line staff and organizational leadership each. One community partner survey respondent identified as program management, and one identified as having multiple roles. Sixty-seven percent of community partner survey respondents (4 of 6) have worked at their organization for four years or more. The remaining have been at their organization for an average of 2.5 years.

A survey of JBNC staff actively involved in partnerships and collaborations—particularly leadership, family navigators, and community school coordinators—supplemented the partner survey. Survey insights add to findings from the partner survey about the frequency and nature of collaboration on FSCS services. The JBNC staff survey received 12 responses, of which four responses were complete and usable. Two others provided information on organizations with which staff members partnered. Staff survey respondents represented a variety of roles in JBNC and were placed in different schools. Three staff responses were from organizational leadership, two were family navigators, and one was a community school coordinator. Eighty-three percent (5 of 6) of staff respondents have been part of the organization for two years or more. JBNC staff survey respondents represented all five schools in the FSCS grant program. While some worked at multiple schools, others worked at either Brookside School 54, H.W. Longfellow Middle School, or Washington Irving Neighborhood School 14.

Caregiver survey analysis

CRISP used a similar analytical approach for the 10 caregiver surveys, which includes two surveys—one in English and one in Spanish—created for each of the five schools in the FSCS grant. These surveys were designed to bring an understanding of caregiver experiences in the FSCS program, with a particular focus on their participation in services and observed outcomes for themselves and their children. Respondents who completed less than 20% of the survey or declined to answer the survey were excluded. Members of the research team aggregated and analyzed the remaining responses in Excel, using descriptive statistical functions. They then wrote findings based on this analysis.

Fourteen respondents agreed to participate in the survey and completed more than 5% of survey questions. Researchers chose 5% as a cutoff because respondents who had completed less than 5% of survey questions did not answer questions beyond the consent prompt. Nearly 93% of respondents completed the surveys in English, and the remaining respondents completed them in Spanish.

On average, each caregiver had 2.3 children enrolled in a school receiving JBNC services as part of the FSCS grant in the 2023–24 school year. Most children were in 4th and 5th grade (32% each, n=22). Nearly 23% were enrolled in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten. Forty percent of caregiver survey respondents had three people in their household, and 40% had five or more (n=10). Additionally, 50% of respondents reported they had two dependents under 18 in their household, while 30% reported they had four or more dependents.

Ninety percent of caregiver survey respondents were female, and 60% were African American or Black (n=10). Twenty percent reported their race as Caucasian or white, and an additional 20% reported being Hispanic or Latinx. When asked what their highest level of education was, 50% of caregiver survey respondents reported high school/GED/FSE, and 30% reported less than high school (n=10). Only one respondent had completed a four-year degree. Additionally, 80% reported their estimated household income as less than $20,000 (n=10).

IPS student data

CRISP researchers analyzed IPS student data from the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school to determine if FSCS programs impacted students attending these schools. This analysis compares student outcomes from FSCS schools to those of selected comparison IPS schools to understand if there was a difference between those attributed to FSCS programs.

Comparison schools

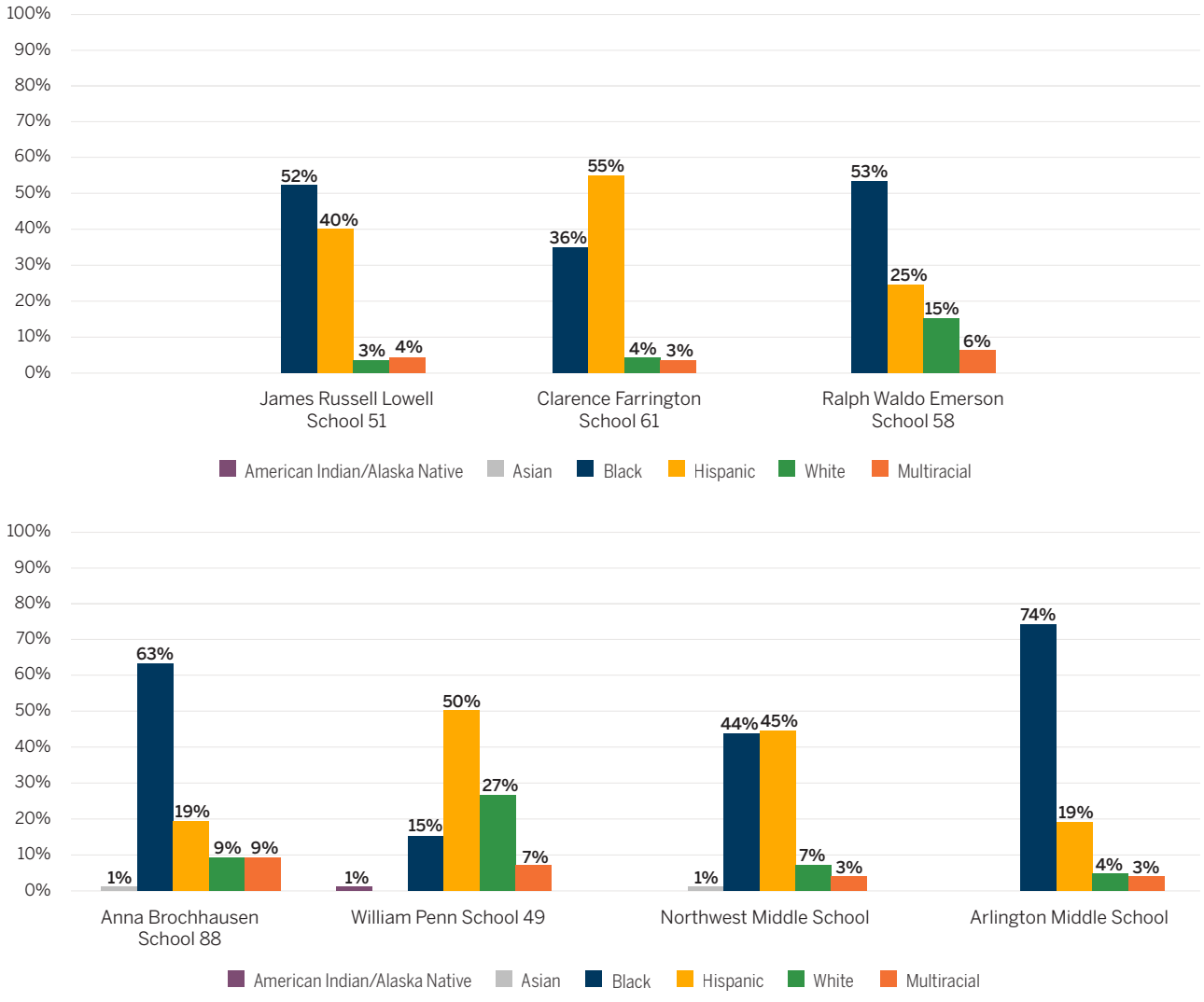
CRISP researchers selected non-FSCS IPS schools against which to compare the FSCS IPS student data (Table 11). They selected these schools based on a variety of characteristics, including the percent of English language learners (ELL) at the school, the demographic makeup of the school (Figure 16), and ILEARN scores in math and English language arts (ELA). The schools included James Russell Lowell School 51 (James Russell Lowell), Clarence Farrington School 61 (Clarence Farrington), Ralph Waldo Emerson School 58 (Ralph Waldo Emerson), Frederick Douglass School 19 (Frederick Douglass), Anna Brochhausen School 88 (Anna Brochhausen), William Penn Middle School (William Penn), Northwest Community Middle School (Northwest), and Arlington Community Middle School (Arlington).

TABLE 11. Comparison school characteristics, 2022–23 school year[19,20]

SCHOOL NAME	ZIP CODE	GRADE LEVELS SERVED	ENROLLED STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH	PERCENTAGE ELL
James Russell Lowell School 51	46218	Pk–5	294	80%	33%
Clarence Farrington School 61	46222	Pk–6	467	81%	45%
Ralph Waldo Emerson School 58	46201	Pk–6	259	82%	21%
Anna Brochhausen School 88	46218	K–5	263	79%	13%
William Penn Middle School	46221	6–8	509	78%	38%
Northwest Middle School	46224	7–8	355	72%	48%
Arlington Middle School	46226	7–8	259	86%	15%

Source: IPS data

FIGURE 16. Racial demographics of comparison schools, 2022–23 academic year[19]



Source: IPS data

Data inclusion and exclusion

Because Longfellow and Washington Irving were added to the FSCS program during its final year, they were excluded from these analyses, leaving three remaining FSCS and seven comparison schools in the analysis. While five years of data was available for FSCS (2019–24), only two years of data was available for comparison schools (2022–24). Therefore, only the change between the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years were included in this analysis.

There was a wide range in attendance rates among students, including under 70%. Given the presumed impact of attendance on school performance, including ILEARN scores, only those students with attendance rates greater than 70% were included in this analysis (94% of students). While it is important to see the impact of low attendance rates in the analysis, these can legitimately be considered outliers with separate causal impact mechanisms on test scores, such as prolonged illness or severe home difficulties.

ILEARN test score outliers also were excluded. The procedure to identify ILEARN math and ELA score outliers was one-and-one-half times the minimum and maximum interquartile ranges, which is the procedure the R program for statistical analysis uses to calculate values outside the whiskers of a standard boxplot. This excluded 16% of student cases.

Finally, since the testing outcome measures are the difference between starting and ending scores, students were excluded if they did not have scores in both 2022–23 and 2023–24 (50% of 8,308 observations). This left 2,096 remaining cases for analysis from a total of 4,192 year cases after duplicate records were removed. Each case in this dataset, therefore, represented one student with score data from both years.

Analysis

Since all the outcome variables—attendance and ILEARN test scores—were measured as continuous, linear multiple regression was used to model these relationships. Student-level data was stored remotely on the secure IU Research Desktop system (Linux) and was analyzed using R version 4.2.1, a programming language used for statistical computing and data visualization.

The demographic predictor variables were cast as dummy variables: free or reduced lunch or not, English language learner or not, race/ethnicity, and gender. A race or ethnicity variable was defined as white, Hispanic, and Black/other.

Except for the attendance rate variable—converted into a transformed absence rate—all other outcome variables for the following statistical models met the assumptions necessary to use a linear regression model.

JBNC program data

CRISP researchers used program data from the JBNC ETO database to analyze family outcome data. They used adult FSCS program participants as the unit of analysis for statistical modeling. The outcome data analyzed included periodic survey responses to the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM).[26] The ASSM measures family self-sufficiency across a variety of domains. JBNC ETO data includes the following domains: employment, income, food, childcare, children's education, adult education, healthcare coverage, life skills, family/social relations, mobility, community involvement, parenting skills, legal, mental health, substance abuse, and safety. Of these, the employment, income, family/social relations, community involvement, and parenting skills domains were used as outcome variables for the family domain area of the logic model.

Program participants self-scored the ASSM survey across five categories per domain. These categories were ordered to indicate an increased degree of self-sufficiency. The outcome variables were calculated as the difference between the last and first ASSM scores for adults with at least two responses for a given ASSM domain.

The ASSM outcome data spanned the last two years of the FSCS program, as JBNC changed its program outcome survey from the Family Development Matrix to the ASSM in September 2022. Because these surveys are not equivalent to each other,

they cannot be combined to create an outcome dataset that extends across the duration of the program. The ASSM domains were chosen as the outcome measures for analysis because they correspond with the years for which IPS data was analyzed and because the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years were when COVID-19 restrictions on school entry were eliminated, thus permitting JBNC staff members and student caregivers to meet in person in the FSCS schools.

JBNC provided CRISP with ETO data related to participant demographics and the following programs or services: EDGE after-school program, adult education and training, employment placement, food box program, participant assistance, net worth, income, Center for Working Families (CWF) workshop attendance, family development workshop attendance, referrals, and the Housing Stability for Student Success (HSSS) program. Initial analysis of the data revealed that most of the program or service data had insufficient observations for inclusion in a statistical regression model. As a result, program predictor variables from ETO were limited to the HSSS program and CWF and family development workshop attendance.

Data inclusion and exclusion

Of 722 original ETO observations, 107 were duplicates and were removed. Of the remaining 615 cases, those with only one ASSM outcome measurement for a given domain were removed—with only one entry—as two measurements are necessary to compute a change in the outcome. The remaining observations used in the analysis included 107 unique individuals.
HSSS program participation data included 717 individual observations. Most of these included a child as the subject, so they were removed, as were cases before January 1, 2022. The research team merged the remaining 56 cases with the ASSM domain.

The JBNC workshop data included a total of 1,291 observations. Duplicate observations and dates prior to January 1, 2022, were removed, resulting in 491 remaining observations. This dataset contained 150 unique program participants. CRISP also merged the workshop data with the ASSM domain data.

Analysis

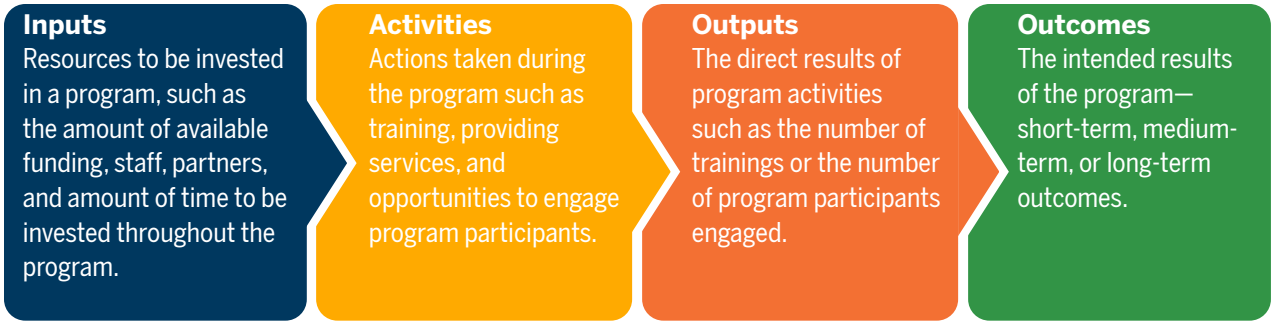
Since all outcome variables were measured as the change between the first and last ASSM survey program participants took, they were continuous variables. Thus, linear multiple regression was used to model these relationships. This individual-level participant data was stored remotely on the secure IU Research Desktop system (Linux) and was analyzed using R version 4.2.1, a programming language used for statistical computing and data visualization.

PART 3.
IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

LOGIC MODEL

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which focuses on the health, happiness, and well-being of children, defines a logic model as a visual depiction of an organization's work including the theory and assumptions underlying the program.[27] A logic model links the resources available to operate a program, planned activities, and expected short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes (Figure 17). Logic models can provide a point of reference for the program's theoretical assumption and principles—or how a program is intended to work.

FIGURE 17. Logic model components



After JBNC was awarded the FSCS grant, CRISP researchers developed a logic model for JBNC's FSCS program. This logic model detailed JBNC's FSCS-related activities and intended outcomes. However, as the FSCS program evolved over the grant period, a second iteration of the logic model became necessary. CRISP researchers produced the updated logic model during the final year of the grant. These updates included changes in FSCS grant goals, available resources, program activities, and intended program outcomes. This evaluation report refers to the logic models developed at the beginning of the grant period as the initial logic model, and the updated model as the final logic model.

INITIAL LOGIC MODEL

CRISP worked with JBNC during the first grant year to develop a logic model connecting each planned activity to the intended FSCS outcomes and goals. The logic model served as a guide and assisted the CRISP team in leveraging logic model discussions to identify community implementation strategies. At the same time, the team ensured JBNC's efforts aligned with DOE's full service community school model. CRISP analysts organized the initial logic model according to different populations, or domain areas the FSCS program served: young children attending early childhood education (ECE), school-aged children attending the IPS schools the FSCS grant targeted, and the school-aged children's families. Services targeting each group included exclusive inputs, activities, and outputs resulting in the intended program outcomes.

The initial logic model incorporated existing JBNC programs and services, which JBNC understood to align with DOE FSCS requirements. These programs included: (1) high-quality school and out-of-school time programs and strategies; (2) family and community engagement and supports; (3) activities that support postsecondary and workforce readiness; and (4) social, health, nutrition, and mental health services. However, additional research to understand the intended grant target population revealed a need for additional services for successful program implementation. Thus, JBNC introduced two additional service types to support children and families. The first supported student transitions from ECE to elementary school; from elementary school to middle school; from middle school to high school; and from high school to postsecondary education and/or the workforce. The second service type addressed juvenile crime through prevention and rehabilitation. JBNC staff planned to implement and evaluate these six service areas by tracking participant attendance throughout the grant period to ensure they could reach program goals. The CRISP team constructed the logic model assuming stable grant funding, staff capacity, and other environmental factors would allow for consistent attendance and activity tracking for each key program area.

Inputs

Figure 18 displays the inputs—or available resources—used during the grant period by focus area. These inputs supported the activities and intended program goals.

FIGURE 18. FSCS grant program inputs

ECE	Students	Family
• ECE centers • ECE staff • Community partner organizations • Early childhood engagement specialist	• Participating IPS schools • School staff • JBNC's Excellence, Discovery, and Growth through Education (EDGE) after-school program staff • Community partner organizations	• Family specialists • Family coaches • Employment coaches • Community partner organizations

JBNC partnered with two ECE centers, Daystar Childcare and Infant Learning Center and East Tenth United Methodist Children and Youth Center and Childcare, to connect FSCS families with high-quality childcare for their pre-kindergarten-aged children. In addition to the ECE staff, the community partners providing services to the children and families the centers served were also inputs in the logic model.

The inputs in the student domain area included the participating IPS schools, youth workers working with the students and their families, community partners who provided services in the schools, and equipment or supplies needed to facilitate activities.

The family domain area included many of the programming aspects of the community schools model. Parents or caregivers and their children were two major focuses of the FSCS grant and this domain area. To reach program goals related to improved outcomes, JBNC included family specialists, family coaches, and employment coaches to work directly with families and provide requested assistance or services as needed. Lastly, community partners providing program services and equipment were listed as available and necessary inputs.

Activities

Figure 19 details each activity implemented during the grant program by focus area. The activities coordinated with the inputs to reach program goals.

FIGURE 19. FSCS grant program activities

ECE	Students	Family
• ECE staff training in high quality professional development opportunities • Participation in high quality ECE activities during and out of daycare	• In-school activities • EDGE after-school program • Other out-of-school activities • School staff professional development • JBNC and community partner collaboration with school staff	• Case management services • Financial success programs • Career, education, and employment programs • Parent Cafés • Family and community events and activities • Housing Stability for Student Success

In addition to receiving high-quality childcare during the day, parents and caregivers could participate in out-of-school programming with their children. Most out-of-school programming occurred on-site at JBNC, providing families opportunities to engage with their children in an interactive environment, learn how to support the development of their child's social-emotional learning, and become more engaged with their community through JBNC. To better serve the children attending day care, ECE center childcare workers participated in professional development activities to support their career growth and to provide continued learning opportunities related to cultural competency.

JBNC and its community partners facilitated in-school and out-of-school programming to increase overall engagement and grade transition readiness. In-school activities included arts and crafts, physical education, and introductions to such new subject areas as robotics. Out-of-school activities included tutoring and mentoring services, homework support, and opportunities for students to engage in community partner-facilitated programming with their caregivers and families.

Additionally, school staff participated in professional development training tailored to career growth, continuous learning, and cultural competency training. Encouraging collaboration among school staff to fortify their ability to serve students and their families also supported further professional development.

Caregivers and families were encouraged to participate in available in-school programming to increase their engagement with their children and their children's school. Similarly, FSCS staff encouraged caregiver and family participation in out-of-school programming to build connections with other families and their community, increase their capacity to support their children's learning needs, and understand how best to support their family's physical and mental health.

Outputs

These outputs occurred throughout the grant program and were tracked. The outputs helped measure progress toward program outcomes and goals.

FIGURE 20. FSCS grant program outputs

ECE	Students	Family
• Day care events attendance • Out-of-day care activity attendance • Staff training attendance	• School attendance • EDGE after-school program attendance • Activity attendance • Participation in supplemental academic activities • Family and community event attendance • School staff training attendance • Improved teaching and learning skills for educators	• Referrals to community partners • Food boxes distributed • Financial success and employment programming participation • Parent Café attendance • Family and community event attendance • Families living in affordable housing

There are three outputs related to ECE activities. The first of these is child attendance at the ECE centers. The second is child attendance at out-of-day care activities for their families. The third is ECE staff professional development attendance.

JBNC expected the implementation of consistent attendance tracking of in-school and out-of-school activities for students alongside tracking students' literacy and math test scores. Attendance tracking was further supported by the attendance campaign implemented in each school focused on reducing absenteeism. JBNC sought to expand the number of students engaged in program activities and their engagement in leadership and community roles or activities.

Additionally, JBNC sought to increase referrals for families in need of additional services not available within the schools and the number of distributions from food pantry services.

JBNC tracked family participation in programs and activities such as Parent Cafés and family and community engagement events. Participation in financial success and career, education, employment supports and training were also outputs from program activities. Family navigator referrals to community partner programs and provision of food boxes for families experiencing food insufficiency were program outputs that resulted from FSCS family-focused activities.

Outcomes

Figure 21 details the expected program outcomes of the three focus areas. Program resource availability, activity implementation, and outputs directly impacted each outcome.

FIGURE 21. FSCS grant program outcomes

ECE	Students	Family
• Improved developmental skills • Improved kindergarten readiness • Enganced social-emotional learning and understanding • Increased parental engagement • Increased community collaboration	• Increased school attendance • Increased interest and engagement in STEM fields • Improved performance in math and literacy at the grade level • Improved social-emotional health and learning • Increased access to mental health and physical health treatment • Improved parental social-emotional skills and supports • Improved awareness of nutrition and healthy foods • Improved social capital • Increased peer support • Improved empowerment and sense of self • Improved grade transitions for students	• Improved income/reduced debt • Improved financial stability • Improved employment/job retention • Increased peer networks • Increased social support • Improved civic engagement • Increased knowledge of community resources • Improved mental/physical health • Enhanced utilization of mental and physical health services • Increased parental/family engagement and retention • Increased family engagement around data metrics • Increased housing stability • Improved parenting skills

JBNC desired to improve the developmental skills, kindergarten readiness, and social-emotional learning and understanding of ECE students by the end of the grant program. JNBC also wanted to see an increase in parental engagement with their children and community through participation in its ECE activities and programs.

The neighborhood centers expected to achieve an increase in students' school attendance and interest in STEM subjects through engagement with implemented in-school and out-of-school programming. JNBC provided tutoring and mentoring services to improve students' performance in math and literacy at grade level and support better student grade transitions.

It implemented out-of-school programming to advance student social-emotional health and learning, increase access to and awareness of mental and physical health resources for students and their families, and improve students' and families' sense of support.

JBNC had various goals for the support of caregivers and families. Family specialists, coaches, and employment coaches worked with families to increase and improve their understanding of mental and physical health. They provided insights about implementing newly learned skills in their everyday lives. Similarly, FSCS grant programming equipped caregivers and families with skills to improve their financial stability, job retention, and housing stability.

FINAL LOGIC MODEL

CRISP and JBNC continually reviewed the logic model and decided to prepare a second iteration, due to the evolving nature, challenges, and successes of FSCS implementation. While the logic model's initial iteration represented JBNC's intended program outcomes, external factors led to delays or differences in program implementation, available resources, and attainable program successes. These circumstances resulted in the need for modifications.

The research team reviewed all available data and documentation and reported changes that occurred throughout the grant period. Following the documentation review, CRISP held numerous meetings with the JBNC team to understand how the program had evolved—including new partnerships, programs, metrics, or goals. These conversations led to the creation of a revised model that accurately reflected how the FSCS grant program developed.

The research team evaluated the initial logic model in the final year of the grant program to assess fidelity to the implementation plan and the community schools model. Discussions with JBNC about the initial logic model identified changes that occurred since the initial program implementation. JBNC staff attributed some of these changes to shifts in staff capacity, while others materialized because of external factors beyond their control.

Changes in programming

Updates to the ECE domain area

Many of the ECE centers experienced turnover and low employee retention throughout the grant period. This staff turnover affected tracking of attendance and developmental and kindergarten readiness metrics. It also impeded program engagement with participants and families.

JBNC staff noted changes to out-of-school activities to document challenges with program implementation and find solutions. They identified the need for an early childhood engagement specialist to engage directly with families that were less involved with their school-age children or had not enrolled their pre-kindergarten children in early childhood education. JBNC also discontinued its Parent and Me Jazzercise and Parent and Me Yoga due to shifts in community program partners. JNBC replaced those programs with its own physical activities. Hosted on-site at JNBC, this programming continued opportunities for the families to connect with their children through physical activity.

The ECE centers refined their attendance tracking methods as staff capacity increased and began using Teaching Strategies Gold in addition to the On My Way Pre-K Kindergarten Readiness assessment to track performance metrics more effectively.

The ECEs added an additional outcome area—increased community collaboration—to capture caregiver, child, and family engagement with their community through the end of the grant period.

Updates to the student domain area

The JBNC FSCS program launched at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and experienced mandated quarantines that affected many public spaces, including schools. As a result, the grant program faced many implementation challenges. Participating schools employed safety measures such as virtual learning and limited in-person events, impairing engagement between JBNC school staff, community partners, and FSCS participants. Students returned partially to in-person learning during the 2021–22 school year. However, instruction at Harshman Middle School remained split between in-person and virtual learning through the 2022–23 school year. By 2023–24, all students at each participating school had returned to the classroom, and JBNC staff could engage and connect with FSCS participants on-site.

Other changes occurred in programming and activities at the participating schools. Brookside and Thomas Gregg added the Learning Loss Program. This program provided students with additional learning support following their return to in-person

learning. Thomas Gregg implemented school transportation services for students who lived within a one-mile radius of its facility.

JNBC collaboration with school staff regarding school transitions and family support at all participating schools was also added to the logic model. Collaboration with school staff was not new to the program but had been overlooked in the logic model's initial creation, School staff had engaged actively with students and their families to ensure students were prepared to transition between grades since the start of the grant. They also had made sure the students and their families were provided with resources and support as needed.

JBNC staff also added an output to the model—improved teaching and learning skills for educators—to track the effectiveness of professional development trainings. Improved grade transitions was also added as a logic model outcome despite being a focus area since the beginning of the program.

Updates to the family domain area

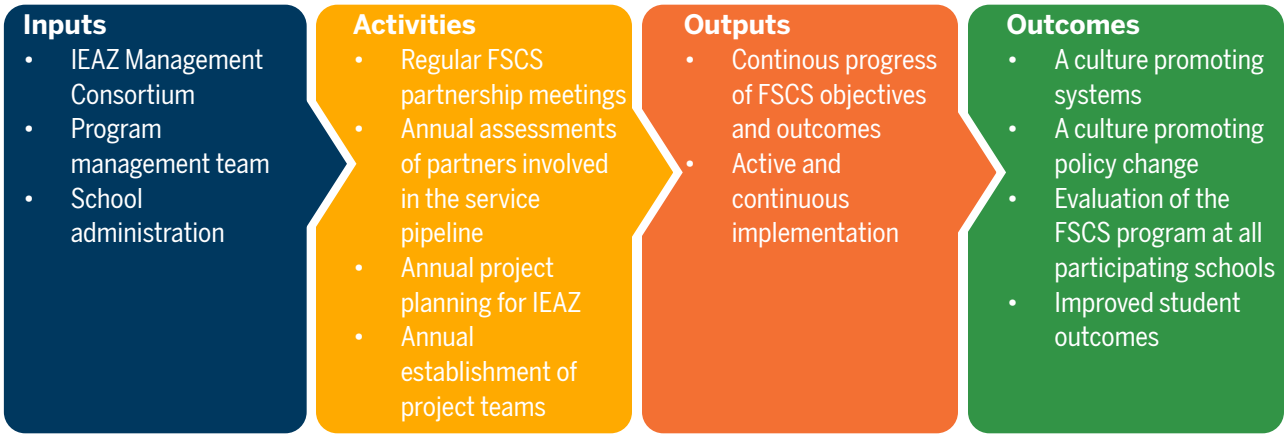
Two program outcomes were added to the family domain of the logic model. With the development of the JBNC-led Housing Stability for School Success (HSSS) initiative to provide families with affordable, stable, and quality housing, increased housing stability was added. Parenting skills were introduced to outcomes in the model to measure FSCS service impact in this domain.

Addition of the culture domain area

Although included in the early program implementation plan and tracked in JNBC documents and reports, this key area was not included in the initial iteration of the logic model. The culture domain measured the overall program impact on the target community and the continued feasibility of the FSCS model.

JNBC staff led this part of the initiative and followed through with regular meetings, community program partner assessments, and annual internal project team evaluations. JNBC and CRISP designed the culture domain with the intention of tracking the progress of FSCS objectives and outcomes longitudinally. In turn, this domain was to showcase JBNC's FSCS program's ability to create and support a culture of promoting systems and policy change supported at each participating school with program evaluation for the duration of the grant (Figure 22).

FIGURE 22. Logic model: culture domain area



JBNC staff also noted unexpected changes regarding engagement with the management consortium and community partners involved with the grant. The COVID-19 pandemic led to many of these changes, while a lack of oversight in planning and executing meetings and events for the IEAZ Management Consortium and community partners caused others. JBNC

staff stated they did not have the capacity to establish a consistent meeting schedule, record meeting minutes, or engage effectively with the management consortium. This lack of consistent engagement led to the management consortium's eventual disbandment. With limited staff capacity, conferences and trainings initially planned for the management consortium and community partners did not take place.

Updated logic model elements

The culture domain primarily focuses on the growth and continued feasibility of the FSCS model and relies on the overall success of the other domain areas. The inputs needed in this domain included the IEAZ Management Consortium, the program management team, and school administration from each participating school. The IEAZ Management Consortium's purpose was to ensure the FSCS program goals were aligned with the mission of the IEAZ and IndyEast Promise Neighborhoods (IEPN) as each of those projects are directly related and feed into one another. The management team worked to ensure successful program implementation, maintain relationships with community partners while maintaining fidelity to program metrics, and rework project teams as needed throughout the grant period. The school administrators were included due to their pivotal role in maintaining FSCS services and programs within the schools and relaying successes or challenges in reaching program goals to JBNC staff.

The activities in the culture domain focused on community partners and JBNC staff. Regular partnership meeting facilitation was fundamental for ascertaining the partners' comprehension of FSCS programming and any areas of need partners may have experienced. Annual community partner assessments would further support the findings from partnership meetings and enable JBNC staff to grasp whether program metrics are being met and, if not, how to remedy any perceived challenges. JBNC also planned for annual project planning for IEAZ to assess any changes that might need to occur because of its close relationship with the FSCS program. Similarly, JBNC planned to reestablish the project teams at the beginning of each year of the program due to its ever-changing nature and needs.

Through implemented activities, JBNC expected continuous progress toward the objectives and outcomes of the FSCS program as well as continuous implementation of activities or changes to activities as needed throughout it.

The final FSCS program evaluation would serve as evidence for the feasibility of a culture of promoting systems and policy change. Moreover, the final evaluation would provide a basis for future iterations of the FSCS model or for the implementation of similar programs designed to directly address the needs of community members and their families.

FIGURE 23. Final FSCS logic model

	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
ECE	• ECE centers • ECE staff • Community partner organization • Early childhood engagement specialist	• ECE staff training in high quality professional development opportunities • Participation in high quality ECE activities during and out of day care	• Day care events attendance • Out-of-day care activity attendance • Staff training attendance	• Improved development skills • Improved kindergarten readiness • Enhanced social-emotional learning and understanding • Increased parental engagement
Students	• Participating IPS schools • School staff • JBNC's Excellence, Discovery, and Growth through Education (EDGE) afterschool program staff • Community partner organizations	• In-school activities • EDGE after school program • Other out-of-school activities • School staff professional development • JBNC and community partner collaboration with school staff	• School attendance • EDGE after-school program attendance • Activity attendance • Participation in supplemental academic activities • Family and community event attendance • School staff training attendance • Improved teaching and learning skills for educators	• Increased school attendance • Increased interest and engagement in STEM fields • Improved performance in math and literacy at the grade level • Improved social-emotional health and learning • Increased access to mental health and physical health treatment • Improved parental social-emotional skills and supports • Improved awareness of nutrition and healthy foods • Improved social capital • Increased peer support • Improved empowerment and sense of self • Improved grade transitions for students
Family	• Family specialists • Family coaches • Employment coaches • Community partner organizations	• Case management services • Financial success programs • Career, education, and employment programs • Parent Cafés • Family and community events and activities • Housing Stability for Student Success	• Referrals to community partners • Food boxes distributed • Financial success and employment programming participation • Parent Café attendance • Family and community event attendance • Families living inaffordable housing	• Improved income/reduced debt • Improved financial stability • Improved employment/job retention • Increased peer networks • Increased social support • Improved civic engagement • Increased knowledge of community resources • Improved mental/physical health • Enhanced utilization of mental and physical health services • Increased parental/family engagement and retention • Increased family engagement around data metrics • Increased housing stability • Improved parenting skills
Culture	• IEAZ Management Consortium • Program management team • School administration	• Regular FSCS partnership meetings • Annual assessments of partners involved in the service pipeline • Annual project planning for IEAZ • Annual establishment of project teams	• Continuous progress of FSCS objectives and outcomes • Active and continuous implementation	• A culture promoting systems • A culture promoting policy change • Evaluation of the FSCS program at all participating schools • Improved student outcomes

COLLABORATION

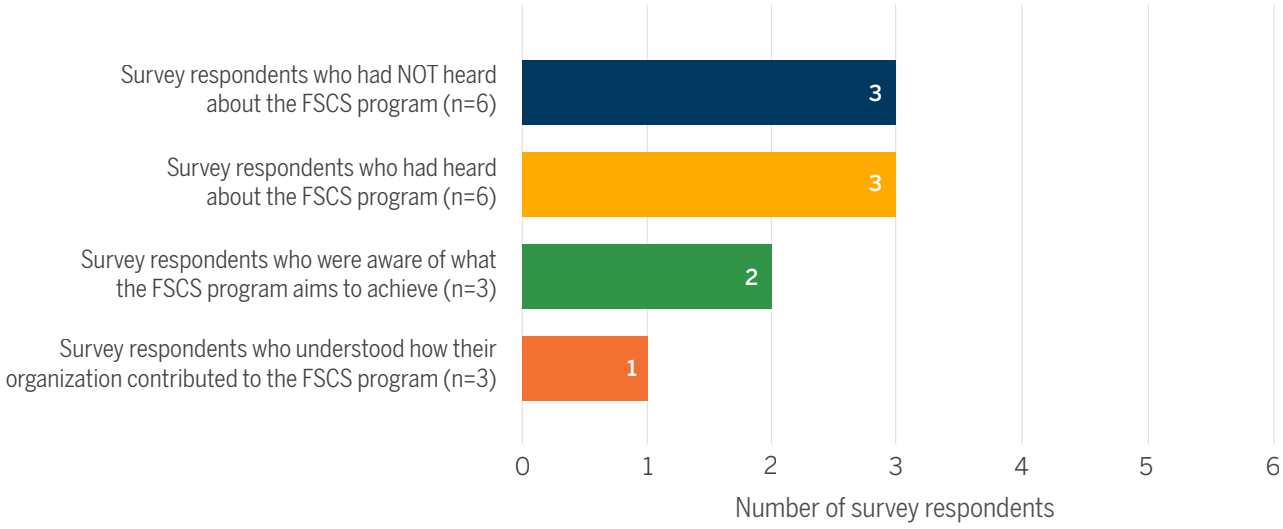
Multidirectional collaboration among schools and service providers is a fundamental element of the community schools model and critical to achieving positive outcomes for students and families.[28] To evaluate FSCS grant collaboration, CRISP surveyed JBNC FSCS staff and community partners and interviewed school staff and community partners to understand each group's experiences with collaboration during the grant period. Responses from the surveys and interviews are represented throughout the following sections and noted accordingly.

PARTNER AWARENESS OF THE FSCS PROGRAM

JBNC staff, community partners, and school staff impressions about FSCS were not always consistent. Survey respondents recognized JBNC services in the school community and appreciated partnering with it. However, some respondents expressed that the increasing number of overlapping grant programs, staff transitions, insufficient interaction with relevant staff members, and need for greater communication between all involved parties prevented a full understanding of the FSCS program.

These barriers to awareness of the FSCS program may have been reflected in the survey results. Three of 6 partner survey respondents had not heard about the FSCS program (Figure 24). Among those who had heard about it, only two survey respondents were aware of what the FSCS program hoped to achieve, and only one of them understood how their organization contributed to the program. When asked if they were familiar with the services or programs JBNC offers to students and families in the context of the FSCS program, an equal number of respondents—two each—selected agree, neither agree nor disagree, and disagree.

FIGURE 24. Community partner awareness of the FSCS program



Interviews with school staff and community partners further explored FSCS program awareness. School staff indicated they felt adequately informed about the grant and its intended use. Some may have given this response because their schools used the community schools model, and they were already familiar with it. In contrast, community partners expressed less clarity about the specific long-term goals of the grant and the scope of their roles and responsibilities.

"I will say I don't feel like I had a really strong understanding frankly. . . . But I did sometimes struggle to understand what was being asked of [partner organization] as far as like reporting or how we were part of the long-term ultimate goals of the grant, and so you know, looking through all of the, you know, the logic model and the outcomes, metrics, summary, and these things. I tried to help, or I tried to personally figure out how [my organization] fit into it, but I don't know that it was ever like explicitly made clear."

— Community partner

The differences in community partners' awareness of the FSCS grant may stem from their role or how schools or other partners introduced them to the grant opportunity. For example, all school staff interviewed by CRISP researchers reported being introduced to the FSCS program through leadership contacts at JBNC, though not all could recall when or how the program was described to them. School staff brought into the program by JBNC leadership may have had more direct and consistent communication about the FSCS grants' purpose and goals. In contrast, some community partners learned about the program indirectly, primarily through their existing relationships with schools, without direct engagement with JBNC. This may have limited their awareness of the program's goals and purpose.

"We just were notified, 'Hey, we're applying for the Full Service Community Schools grant, you know. We'd like [school] to be a participant. Here are some ways in which we think us getting this grant and [school] coming alongside, you know, as a school partner, would be beneficial to your school community.'"

— School staff member

These findings suggest the inclusion of all stakeholders in all aspects of program implementation can help facilitate a greater understanding of the intended purpose, goals, and outcomes. This inclusion should involve greater school staff and community partner engagement in conversations with JBNC about the FSCS program from the beginning or providing intentional onboarding when they are asked to join as partners. Ensuring consistent follow-up with community partners introduced through schools will improve their awareness and alignment with the program's objectives.

ALIGNMENT BETWEEN PARTNER AND FSCS PROGRAM GOALS

Three interviewees representing three participating schools described their schools' alignment with the community schools model—centered on community and relationship building—prior to FSCS program implementation. This preexisting alignment of core school values facilitated easier integration with FSCS program requirements and goals. As schools were already engaging in the community schools approach, adding FSCS grant funds allowed schools to increase support for existing programs and expand programming to better meet community needs.

"I don't think there was really a thought that we would not do this. . . . I think the unique relationship that our organization [our schools that we operate] have with JBNC and working so closely with them and alongside them, and what they are supporting for the community, I think, just made a lot of sense for us to be partnered and aligned in [the FSCS program]."

— School staff member

Preexisting relationships with JNBC enhanced alignment between the schools' missions and the FSCS program. Each school staff respondent noted having close ties with JBNC staff and felt that the overall mission of JBNC and the schools overlapped.

Interviewed community partners aligned with the FSCS model, even if they were not always fully aware of it, by expressing their commitment to providing high-quality services. However, they did not note the same kinds of mission alignment as

school staff within their interviews. Community partners may serve more specific roles in the FSCS program than school staff. Therefore, they may not have as much knowledge about overall FSCS goals.

EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATION

CRISP researchers asked community partner representatives and JBNC staff similar questions on the nature of collaborations to understand both perspectives on FSCS partnerships through different surveys. Table 12 summarizes the types of collaboration questions asked and the average responses of survey respondents.[A] In general, JBNC staff and community partner survey respondents agreed on items related to collaboration. They disagreed, however, on whether meetings between JBNC and partner organizations were consistent. While JBNC staff, on average, agreed that meetings with partner organizations were consistent, partner survey respondents gave mixed responses about the consistency of meetings.

When partners were asked about how their organizations and JBNC specifically collaborated to implement FSCS programming, 83% of partner survey respondents and 50% of JBNC staff survey respondents agreed that both organizations brought respective resources to the table to address any gaps hindering program delivery. About 67% of partners surveyed and 50% of JBNC staff surveyed agreed that JBNC and partners developed strategies collaboratively to improve program delivery Also, 83% of partners surveyed and 50% of staff surveyed agreed that JBNC and FSCS partners implemented effective strategies to respond to the individual needs of students and/or their families.

TABLE 12. Collaboration effectiveness

SURVEY QUESTION	JBNC STAFF AVERAGE RESPONSE	COMMUNITY PARTNER AVERAGE RESPONSE
Consistent meetings between JBNC and partner organization	Agree (n=4)	Neither agree nor disagree (n=6)
JBNC and/or organizational leadership supported collaboration	Agree (n=4)	Agree (n=6)
JBNC and community partners brought respective resources to the table to address any gaps hindering delivery of programs.	Agree (n=4)	Agree (n=6)
JBNC and FSCS partners collaboratively developed strategies to improve delivery of programs.	Agree (n=4)	Agree (n=6)
JBNC and FSCS partners implemented effective strategies to respond to the individual needs of students and/or their families.	Agree (n=4)	Agree (n=6)

Impact of collaborative leadership and decision making on effectiveness

School staff and community partner interviewees shared their experiences with collaboration and feedback on the elements of an effective partnership. While survey results suggest that, on average, respondents felt JBNC and community partners were collaboratively working to implement FSCS programming and address the needs of the target population, school staff and community partner interviewees provided more nuanced perspectives on the level of collaborative decision making occurring between JBNC staff, school staff, and partners.

[A] The full text of the survey questions is available upon request.

School staff and community partner interviewees identified several key elements of successful partnerships, including transparency, accountability to goals, responsible stewardship and sharing of resources, and an intentional approach to collaborative decision making. However, school staff opinions about collaboration and shared decision making varied. One interviewee felt that shared decision making was exemplified in their ability to work with JBNC FSCS program leadership to define and redefine roles and responsibilities within the partnership. This shared decision making can improve or strengthen partnerships and, therefore, service delivery.

> *"We've had to go back through and redefine some of those roles and key responsibilities. I think JBNC has been really great at being open to hearing our perspectives. I appreciate they're always willing to hear us and take those things into consideration, as they've then evolved those roles over the years"*
> *— School staff member*

Similarly, one community partner underscored the importance of defining roles with JBNC and the schools. This partner noted that collaborating with schools and JBNC to understand the full extent of their available services could lead to a more robust partnership.

> *"It could also look like our tutors coming in sometimes and we help do interpretation for parent-teacher conferences. So that's something that we have the skill and ability to do but thinking broader about what type of services do the schools really need."*
> *— Community partner*

Some school staff interviewees felt that collaborative and shared decision making were not consistently incorporated throughout the grant application process and program implementation. They also desired more involvement in decisions regarding how resources should be allocated. Full participation and buy-in from principals and school staff are fundamental components of FSCS.[14,29] School staff not only are responsible for adjusting teaching methods and processes within the school but also have indispensable contextual knowledge about students and families, needed services, and the strategic implementation of partnerships and resources.

> *"'There wasn't necessarily a lot of seeking input and guidance on how would you guys [the school] want to use these funds? . . . I mean it's all worked out. I don't know that I necessarily would have asked for it to be utilized in a different fashion."*
> *— School staff member*

Other community partner interviewees also mentioned difficulties understanding the full scope of the partnership and needing clearer definitions of roles and responsibilities. Some partners noted that they were responsible for building and maintaining FSCS partnerships with schools when partners had thought JBNC would facilitate that relationship. Additionally, some community partners felt that, once in the school, principals and school staff could not provide the necessary support for effectively implementing services. One partner mentioned that additional fundraising efforts were required to sustain services within schools.

Overall, these insights underscore that school staff and community partners desired more fully integrated decision making and consistent communication with FSCS program leadership. Respondents felt that improving in these areas would allow for more effective collaborations. As interviewees pointed out, successful partnerships are characterized by early involvement in identifying roles and responsibilities and a collaborative approach to allocating resources and funding that ensures all partners have a voice in the process.

"Except for we know that partnerships are hard and they're hard work. And when you work as closely as we do with another organization or another agency, we have to kind of treat it like a marriage a little bit, and so we've gone through our ups and downs over the years. It comes to what is the best way to communicate and what are our values as an organization? What's their values? Where do we see those types of things? Where do we align, and where do we have to come together and talk through?"
— School staff member

Impact of communication on effectiveness

Community partner survey respondents asserted that their organizations and JBNC met consistently and that leadership supported collaboration, as referenced above in Table 12. All partners who responded to the survey collaborated with Community School Coordinators as a part of the FSCS program, and 83% (5 of 6) either agreed or strongly agreed that their frequency of communication was enough to provide effective programming or activities. Fifty percent (3 of 6) of community partner respondents collaborated with family navigators, and 33% (2 of 3) agreed or strongly agreed that their frequency of communication with family navigators was adequate for programming. Only 33% (2 of 6) of community partner respondents collaborated directly with FSCS program leadership.

In the staff survey, JBNC staff members were asked which organizations they partnered with in six domains–early childhood education providers, health and wellness providers, food partners, after-school programs, community centers, and other partners. Two of 4 JBNC staff survey respondents believed that partnerships with partner organizations changed during the FSCS grant period for assorted reasons including varied strengths of relationships and some partners being able to support JBNC to a different extent than expected.

Communication with early childhood education providers

Survey respondents collaborated with 4 out of 5 early childhood education partners—East Tenth United Methodist Children and Youth Center; Thomas Gregg Pre-kindergarten; Women, Infant, and Children (WIC); and Childcare Answers. The highest number of JBNC staff members had collaborated with Thomas Gregg Pre-kindergarten (3 of 6). Thirty-three percent (2 of 6) had collaborated with East Tenth United Methodist Children and Youth Center and Childcare Answers each. None of the respondents had collaborated with Daystar Childcare and Infant Learning Center. Five respondents who collaborated with ECE partners reported ambivalence ("neither agree nor disagree") when asked whether the frequency of communication with early childhood education providers was enough to provide effective programming or activities. The remaining staff member—who worked with Childcare Answers—agreed that the frequency of communication was effective.

Communication with health and wellness providers

JBNC staff survey respondents collaborated with 10 of the health and wellness partners listed—Firefly Children and Family Alliance, Eskenazi Health, Shalom Center, Dental Safari, Smiles Dental Care, Indiana Department of Health, Indiana University Speech, Indiana University Compassion Clinic, People's Health, and Anthem. The most respondents, about 50%, partnered with Firefly Children and Family Alliance, and 33% partnered with Smiles Dental Care. One staff member each collaborated with Eskenazi Health, Shalom Center, or Anthem. Each strongly agreed that the frequency of communication with their respective health and wellness providers was enough to provide programming effectively. Staff members who collaborated with Dental Safari, Smiles Dental Care, or Indiana University Compassion Clinic agreed with the statement, although not as strongly. Those who collaborated with the Indiana Department of Health, Indiana University Speech, or People's Health were ambivalent ("neither agree nor disagree") about whether communication was sufficient to be effective. All respondents who partnered with Firefly Children and Family Alliance agreed that the frequency of collaboration was appropriate—one strongly agreed and two simply agreed.

Communication with food partners

Staff respondents who partnered with food organizations collaborated with Gleaners Food Bank, Midwest Food Bank, Brookside School Garden, Common Threads, The Patachou Foundation, and Second Helpings. All JBNC staff who partnered with Gleaners Food Bank, Midwest Food Bank, and Second Helpings unanimously agreed that the frequency of communication with respective food organizations was enough to provide programming effectively. Of the 3 JBNC staff who partnered with Brookside School Garden, two agreed and one neither agreed nor disagreed. All three staff members who partnered with Common Threads agreed or strongly agreed that the frequency of communication was appropriate for effective service delivery. Two JBNC staff reported collaborating with The Patachou Foundation, and results were split between strongly agree and neither agree nor disagree that frequency of communication was effective. Overall, most respondents (66% of 15 responses) who partnered with any food partner agreed with this statement.

Communication with after-school program providers

JBNC staff respondents partnered with the six after-school programs listed in the survey—Super Snack, Young Life Indianapolis, Evaluate Indy, DREAM Alive, Lily STEAM, and Kids Dance Outreach. Nearly all respondents agreed that communication with organizations that provided after-school programs occurred frequently enough to be effective. All three JBNC staff respondents who collaborated with Super Snack strongly agreed that the frequency of communication with the organization was enough to provide effective programming. The second most popular after-school program collaboration was with Kids Dance Outreach.

Communication with community centers

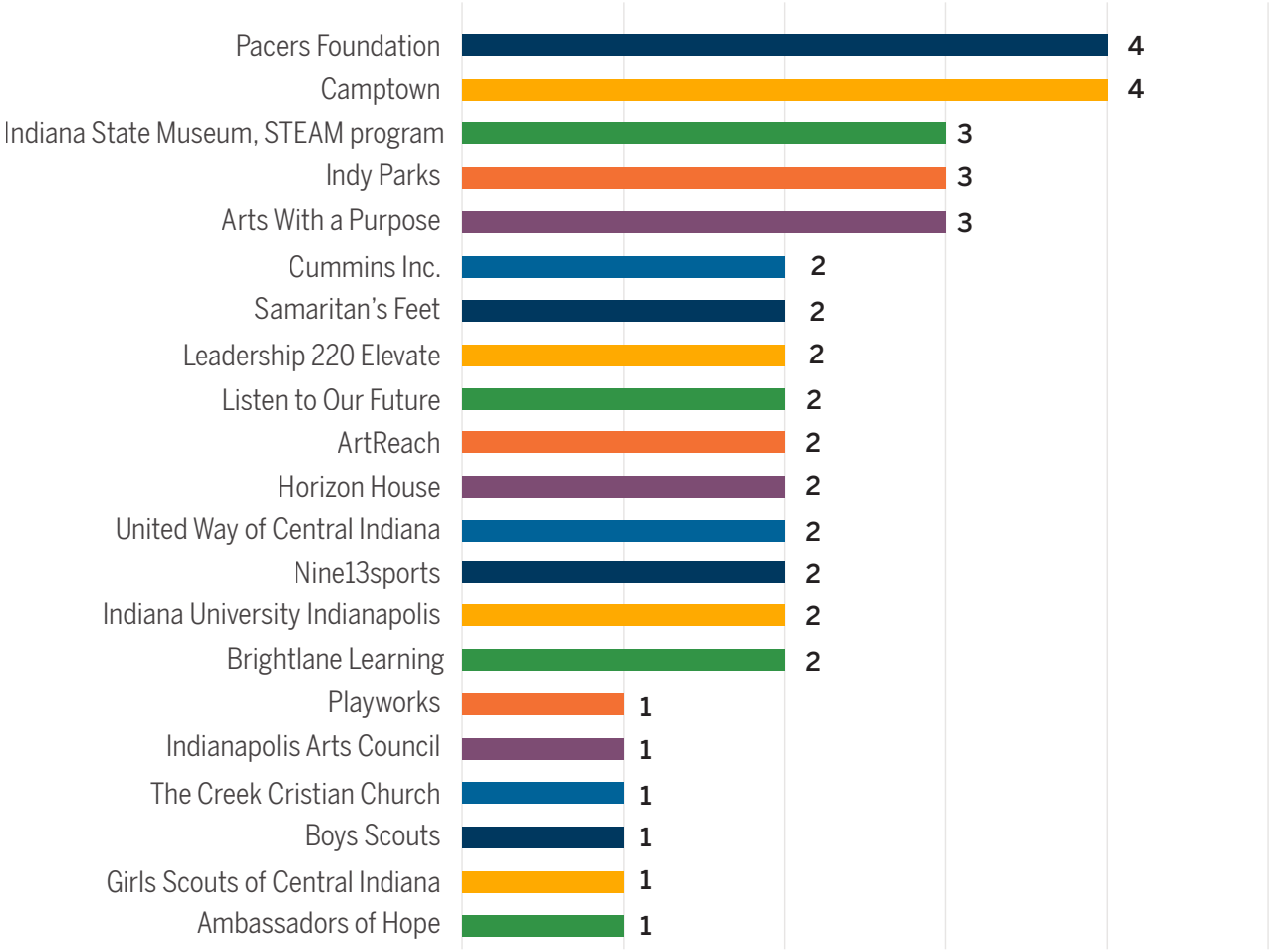
JBNC staff members also collaborated with four community centers to provide FSCS programming—Shepherd Community Center, Edna Martin Christian Center (EMCC), Westminster Neighborhood Services, and Peace Learning Center. Most (4 out of 6) survey respondents partnered with EMCC.[B] Two of the 4 strongly agreed that the frequency of communication with the organization was effective for programming, while one respondent agreed and one neither agreed nor disagreed. Two of the 4 JBNC respondents also partnered with Shepherd Community Center, Westminster Neighborhood Services, and Peace Learning Center and unanimously agreed that communication frequency was effective for all three.

Communication with other service providers

Finally, JBNC staff members collaborated with 21 other organizations with varying frequencies (Figure 25). The community partners with which JBNC staff members collaborated most were the Pacers Foundation and Camptown. Four JBNC staff members reported a partnership with them. Three out of 4 respondents also strongly agreed that JNBC communicated enough with the Pacers Foundation, with one respondent being ambivalent. Similarly, 3 out of 4 staff members who partnered with Camptown, an adventure learning nonprofit, agreed that the frequency of communication with JBNC was effective, and one respondent was ambivalent.

[B] EMCC also received an FSCS grant in 2020 and serves residents in the Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood on the near northeast side of Indianapolis, adjacent to JBNC target ZIP codes. JBNC and EMCC were jointly awarded a DOE Promise Neighborhood grant to improve educational outcomes in the near northeast and east sides of Indianapolis. They are working together to build on the community schools infrastructure developed during their FSCS programs and deliver on Promise Neighborhoods objectives.

FIGURE 25. Number of JBNC staff collaborating with community partner organizations



IMPROVEMENTS FROM COLLABORATION

Community partners and JBNC staff were asked about improvements occurring as the result of collaboration, including sharing resources, the ability to serve an increased number of students and families, access to professional development, connections with new program partners, program administration, and organizational goal attainment (Table 13). The majority of community partner and JBNC staff survey respondents felt that resource sharing improved during the grant period. All four JBNC staff surveyed witnessed improvements in resource sharing with 25% seeing major improvement, 25% seeing moderate improvement, and the remaining 50% seeing minor improvements. On the partner survey side, 1 of 6 respondents believed that resource sharing was a major improvement in collaboration with JBNC for the program. Four others reported minor or moderate improvements in resource sharing, while only 1 of the 6 respondents thought it was not at all improved.

All community partner and JBNC staff survey respondents indicated that the partnerships improved their organization's ability to serve larger numbers of students and families, although to varying degrees. The average responses were 3.0 on the community partner survey and 2.3 on the JBNC staff survey. The scale for this question had 5 choices, with 2 representing "minor improvement" and 3 representing "moderate improvement."

Additionally, 83% of the 6 community partners and all four JBNC staff members who responded to the survey agreed that the FSCS program collaboration improved their access to expanded professional development resources. Four of the 6 community partners and all JBNC staff members believed they formed better connections with new partners as a result.

All community partners and JBNC staff members surveyed also reported that the FSCS grant collaboration improved processes required to provide activities and services and their ability to fulfill organizational goals. School staff interviewees also identified several factors that contributed to process improvement. They related principally to staffing liaisons or support roles included in the grant. Specifically, interviewees highlighted the integration of the family navigator and the community school coordinator, considered essential for delivering FSCS programming at the schools. Interviewees said the community school coordinator and the family navigator added extra support layers and improved coordination between schools, JBNC, and community partners.

> *"Those two key positions that we have through Boner right now are the family navigator and the community school coordinator. They added a school site manager, I think, who supports those two positions at multiple schools. We saw those as added layers of support for their staff members who were housed here."*
>
> *— School staff member*

TABLE 13. Improvements resulting from collaboration

SURVEY QUESTION	JBNC STAFF AVERAGE RESPONSE	COMMUNITY PARTNER AVERAGE RESPONSE
Sharing of resources	Moderate improvement (n=4)	Moderate improvement (n=6)
Connections with new program partners	Moderate improvement (n=4)	Moderate improvement (n=6)
Ability to serve an increased number of students and/or their families	Minor improvement (n=4)	Moderate improvement (n=6)
Processes required to provide activities and programs	Moderate improvement (n=4)	Moderate improvement (n=6)
Fulfilling my organization's goals	Moderate improvement (n=4)	Moderate improvement (n=6)

Institutional benefits

Both school staff and community partners experienced institutional benefits from their involvement in the FSCS program, including increased operational capacity, shared resources, and partnerships. For example, school staff interviewees described how the FSCS grant facilitated the implementation of a ticketing system, which was adopted across various FSCS schools. This ticketing system allows schools to communicate with each other about service needs and to coordinate efforts more effectively. The system is beneficial beyond the scope of the grant, as schools are developing infrastructure and workflows for accountability, communication, and collaboration under the community schools model.

> *"Because [the ticketing system] kept . . . all those people that are working together to support our families and [the ticketing system] keeps us really accountable for all the work that we're doing."*
>
> *— School staff member*

Additionally, school staff interviewees explained that they leveraged resources from other school sites and partners to improve service delivery, particularly around staffing. Individuals in FSCS grant-funded roles could address multiple needs within the school. Family navigators, in particular, assisted school social workers who were already managing hundreds of students. Bilingual family navigators also helped bridge language and cultural gaps to better engage with families.

A partnership between a school and the IU School of Speech Pathology provided services to students and families and allowed IU students to fulfill clinical hours in a local school setting. Multiple groups benefited through this service partnership. Similarly, a partner interviewee highlighted how partnerships through FSCS helped schools address critical issues, such as teacher shortages, by providing additional support and resources to meet student needs. In this case, the community partner mentioned how its tutoring service helped support educators in improving reading comprehension among students.

> *"We also help with addressing some other really big key issues that schools experience such as having a teacher shortage or an interventionist shortage. We're there as extra support to intentionally pull students out during that time. This is such a great resource that every school needs this. So how do we replicate this in other schools?"*
>
> *— Community partner*

CHALLENGES TO COLLABORATION

JBNC staff, school staff, and community partners experienced varied challenges with collaboration on the FSCS program. For example, JBNC staff survey respondents, on average, identified differences in goals for students and families, miscommunication about activities or programming, and the time investment required to implement the program effectively as minor challenges. In contrast, community partner survey respondents, on average, reported that these areas were not a challenge for them (Table 14). Interviews with school staff and community partners revealed organizational goal alignment, varied communication, and access to relevant partners as key challenges.

TABLE 14. Challenges to collaboration

SURVEY QUESTION	JBNC STAFF AVERAGE RESPONSE	COMMUNITY PARTNER AVERAGE RESPONSE
Different goals for students and/or their families	Minor challenge (n=4)	Not at all a challenge (n=6)
Miscommunication about the activities or programming	Minor challenge (n=4)	Not at all a challenge (n=6)
Relationships with the relevant organization staff	Minor challenge (n=4)	Minor challenge (n=6)
Investment of time needed to implement the program well	Minor challenge (n=4)	Not at all a challenge (n=6)

Organizational goal alignment

Four of the 6 partner survey respondents and half of the staff survey respondents reported that having different goals was not a challenge for collaboration. The remainder reported that having different goals for students and their families posed either a minor or moderate challenge. Additionally, a greater proportion of JBNC staff (3 of 4) than partners (2 of 6) felt that the investment of time needed to implement the program well was a collaboration challenge.

Interviews with school staff and community partners identified difficulties in collaborating with various partners, each with its own mission, vision, and focus. For example, school staff noted that in the school context, things move quickly, including timelines for students and overall academic priorities. Community work may take longer to show changes in family conditions. Community partners also highlighted varied experiences working with schools. Some had previously established relationships within schools using the community model, while others were new to working with schools. Overall, these insights suggest that partnerships are affected by differing goals (schools vs. community partners) and levels of experience in navigating the community schools model.

"I think it's a little bit different because we are a school, we have 180 days with students in a year. And then our students, a lot of them, are coming to us in situations where they're far behind and those kinds of things. So we're on this path of what can we do? We've got this amount of time and these key things that we've got to get kids to understand and know before the test comes, or before we are able to send them on to the next grade. So I think school wise, and if you take that lens to it, we're always going, going, going."

— School staff member

Variations in communication

Survey respondents identified communication between schools, community partners, and JBNC was as important to ensure smooth processes and FSCS program management. Seventeen percent of community partner respondents and half of JBNC staff respondents believed that miscommunication about activities or programming posed a challenge but not a major one.

Interviewees elaborated on the varying levels of engagement and communication. In cases where communication was more effective, school staff interviewees highlighted consistent and near-daily communication with JBNC staff embedded within the schools. This level of communication helped ensure that student and family needs were being met. Similarly, community partners reported varying levels of engagement and communication from schools and other partners. Some mentioned having strong relationships with partner schools through regular updates and communication. One partner noted that they checked in weekly with schools, either on-site or via email, which was particularly helpful for managing the FSCS program.

In contrast, communication with JBNC program leadership occurred at a different cadence, with interviewees noting that it was typically monthly or biweekly, depending on roles. School staff interviewees indicated these leadership meetings could have been more productive if they had been more intentional and collaborative. Interviewees desired a space for partners to share best practices and discuss ways to address needs together better.

"We've had to streamline over the years, because it can be a lot of people doing a lot of different things and a lot of meetings. And we're like, what are we all doing here? What is going to get us the biggest bang for our buck? How do we be more intentional with everyone's time? And what is it that we're really wanting to support?"

— School staff member

Some community partners also expressed confusion about their roles or responsibilities, the overall objectives and outcomes of the grant, or difficulty receiving timely communication about programs. Multiple interviewees noted a desire for a greater focus on how partners and schools could collaborate toward shared goals during partner meetings.

"I wish that those meetings would have been a little more robust. I wish that there had been more attention given to the goals, objectives, and outcomes, and how are we all actually driving towards those things as partners, as schools. What is the big picture?"

— Community partner

Different approaches to communication modes and processes might affect the effective implementation of the program. Overall, insights from the surveys and interviews suggest the need to streamline and tailor communication processes among school staff, JBNC staff, and community partners based on specific roles in the implementation of the FSCS program (e.g., service delivery, program management, administrative support).

Access to relevant partners

Community partner and JBNC staff survey respondents noted that having access to relevant partners, including the appropriate staff within a community partner organization, was a challenge to collaboration and delivering services that meet community needs. Fifty percent of community partners surveyed and 75% of JBNC staff surveyed reported that identifying and building relationships with relevant staff (on the JBNC or partner side, accordingly) posed a minor or moderate challenge in implementing the FSCS program. Interviews with school staff and community partners further highlighted ongoing needs that potentially could be met through additional partnerships, but interviewees did not have access to the appropriate channels to form these relationships.

For example, one school staff member perceived a general lack of emergency assistance available to families in the city of Indianapolis, particularly to those experiencing urgent needs such as rental assistance, which fall outside the scope of what can be provided through current services within the FSCS program.

> *"I think across the city the big gap is emergency assistance for families. When families call last minute and say, being kicked out tomorrow from my house there's little to nothing we can do to help there. We've got a little bit of barrier-buster funds at the school. Not enough to pay people's back rent for 3 months. And so that's a challenge."*
>
> *— School staff member*

Another school staff member identified transportation as a key need, particularly for families in the IPS district who have limited access to buses to reach their neighborhood schools and services.

> *"Transportation assistance for our families, just getting things that are reliable, where our schools are situated. Well, in general, with our district with IPS. It's a very limited area where you can access a bus and still go to our neighborhood school. And so that can be challenging for a lot of our families even if they live close."*
>
> *— School staff member*

Partner interviewees noted a gap in mental health services, as schools have limited capacity to address these needs, and a desire to make new connections to improve in this area. Partner interviewees also mentioned they were experiencing increased demand for food assistance at their pantries and a decrease in capacity to meet this demand.

> *"The need has increased. Unfortunately, the food bank had decreased the amount of food that they're providing every month. The program has decreased, because, of course, their need is, their demand is also increasing."*
>
> *— Community partner*

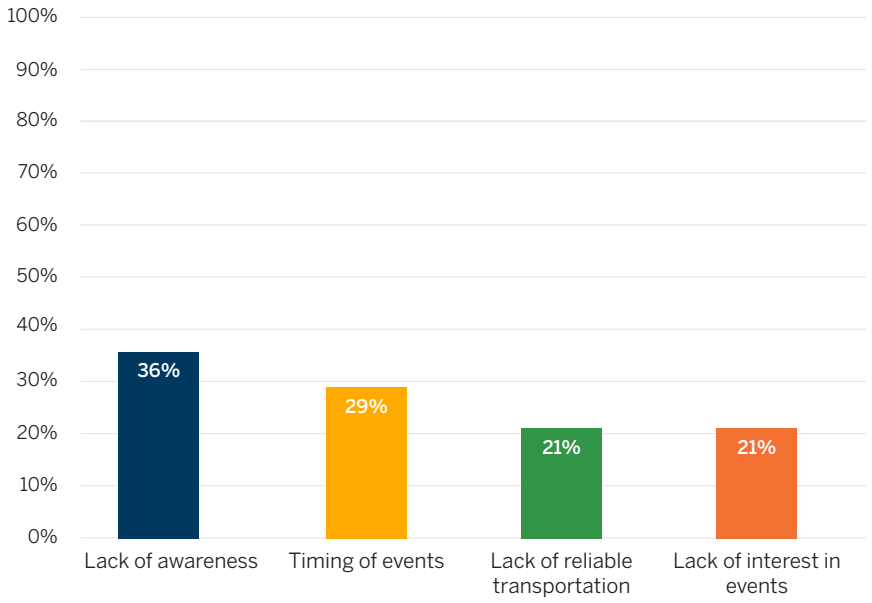
School staff and community partners reported a positive impact from the services provided to families and communities, but also noted that despite their desire to meet students' and families' needs, barriers continue to create challenges. These challenges present an opportunity for the FSCS program leadership to assist in identifying and facilitating partnerships that align with community needs.

PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

AWARENESS OF SERVICES

Caregiver survey respondents had varying levels of knowledge and engagement with FSCS programming. Thirty-six percent of 14 caregiver survey respondents reported a lack of awareness of events or program resources as the main reason they did not participate in JBNC FSCS programs during the 2023–24 school year (Figure 26). A mismatch between the timing of events and activities and caregiver schedules surfaced as the second-most selected reason they did not participate in services (29%). An equal number of caregiver survey respondents cited the lack of reliable transportation to events and a lack of interest in attending events as reasons they did not participate (21%). Caregivers also reported events or resources not being available in their language, no longer needing help, and lack of interest in services offered as reasons they did not participate.

FIGURE 26. Most common caregiver reasons for not participating in FSCS-related programs



In contrast to the caregiver survey responses, most community partner survey respondents and JBNC staff survey respondents perceived an increase in awareness (Table 15). On average, the six community partner survey respondents agreed that due to partnerships, students and families were more aware (67%) of, had increased access (83%) to, and access to a wider variety (83%) of FSCS-related services and programs. Additionally, 3 of 4 of JBNC staff survey respondents believed students and families were more aware of and had increased and broader access to FSCS-related services and programs due to partnerships. All respondents agreed with these statements.

TABLE 15. Impact of collaboration on participants

SURVEY QUESTION	JBNC STAFF AVERAGE RESPONSE	COMMUNITY PARTNER AVERAGE RESPONSE
Students and/or families were more aware of FSCS-related activities and programs due to partnerships.	Agree (n=4)	Agree (n=6)
Students' and/or families' access to FSCS-related activities and programs increased due to partnerships.	Agree (n=4)	Agree (n=6)
Students and/or families had access to a wider variety of activities and programs due to partnerships.	Agree (n=4)	Agree (n=6)
Students' and/or families' use of available FSCS-related programs increased due to partnerships.	Agree (n=4)	Agree (n=6)

QUALITY OF SERVICES

Of the caregiver respondents who met with a JBNC family navigator in the 2023–24 school year, all indicated being satisfied with these meetings—73% were very satisfied and 27% were satisfied (n=11). Of the caregivers who met with financial and career coaches, about 64% were very satisfied and 9% were dissatisfied with their meetings with their career coach (n=11), while 67% were very satisfied with their meetings with the financial coach during the school year (n=12). Of the 12 respondents who attended Parent Cafés, 92% were satisfied or very satisfied. Similarly, 92% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with food pantries (n=12). Of the 13 respondents who participated in emergency assistance programs and/or tax sites, 54% were very satisfied, 31% were satisfied, and 15% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Further, 92% of caregiver respondents were satisfied with the attendance campaign, the majority of whom were very satisfied. Eighty-three percent of caregivers also were satisfied with the Parent University. All caregiver respondents who participated in Parent in Touch (PIT) Days, school-based family events, and health and well-being services, including mental health counseling and health checkups, were satisfied. Eight out of 10 caregiver survey respondents reported that they felt comfortable asking their child's school for resources that were not already provided during the 2023–24 school year. Additionally, 7 out of 9 caregivers who responded to the survey agreed that the services they received from JBNC during the 2023–24 school year met their expectations. These same seven respondents reported a positive overall experience with JBNC during the 2023–24 school year and would recommend the center to their family members or friends.

FIDELITY

Fidelity describes how FSCS programming aligned with the original program plan as designed. This report section assesses fidelity to the program model by comparing the FSCS logic model to survey and interview data from JBNC staff, school staff, and community partners, in addition to program documentation.

TO WHAT EXTENT DID JBNC OPERATE ITS PROGRAM WITH FIDELITY?

Although implementation of the FSCS program looked different across participating schools for various reasons, the types of programming school staff and community partner respondents described corresponded with what the JBNC FSCS program leadership detailed in the logic model. The services and programming the schools and community partners implemented addressed student and family needs and considered their changing needs during and after the pandemic. Four of 6 community partner survey respondents reported that their organization collaborated with JBNC from at least 2021 through the end of the FSCS program and provided services to Brookside, listed on the original grant application. One out of 6 respondents reported that their organization provided services only to Harshman during the 2023–24 school year as part of the FSCS program.

Types of FSCS programming and services

A major school-led FSCS program was attendance campaigns. These attendance campaigns became especially important post-COVID, when the schools realized that returning to school in person posed a challenge for many students and families. While these campaigns looked different across the FSCS schools, they all focused on increasing student attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism. School staff interviewees noted that individuals in JBNC-supported roles were instrumental in these efforts, as they connected with parents and students to address needs related to attendance.

The schools also held family engagement events, such as educational Parent Cafés. These events varied from school to school but aimed to increase parental involvement and engagement with school staff, thus creating another point of contact should they have additional needs. Interviewees noted that these events had the effect of increasing attendance throughout the grant.

School staff and community partners also discussed other types of FSCS programming present in different schools and to different degrees, generally due to student and family needs. Some FSCS schools instituted educational programming, such as in-school and out-of-school tutoring. Multiple schools had food pantries and nutrition education programs, although pantry size and scope varied. Additionally, multiple schools had some form of recess programming, where students would receive structured play and skills centered around conflict resolution. Finally, one interviewee noted the inclusion of peer mediation training within their school.

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCED IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY?

School staff and community partner interviewees explored how various facilitators and challenges shaped FSCS program implementation. Key factors that have supported the program's implementation include JNBC-supported roles and partnerships. They provided new services and programming to meet evolving student and family needs. This section of the report focuses on these positive influences and also addresses COVID-19 pandemic challenges, issues with student and family engagement, and the complexities of managing partnerships and changing needs.

Facilitators to implementation

JBNC-supported roles

School staff interviewees noted that establishment of JBNC-supported roles, namely the family navigator and the community school coordinator, were critical to FSCS program implementation. These roles expanded the schools' capacity to engage families and community partners. Community partner interviewees also identified individuals in these roles as facilitators, noting they connected students to programming and acted as liaisons between the school and the external partner organization.

Partnerships

Interviewees noted that partnerships could be important facilitators of FSCS program implementation. Partners opened doors to new services and programming to meet evolving student and family needs. Partnerships, especially those with staff co-located in the schools, also provided additional capacity and staffing during school hours, which school staff interviewees identified as helpful. Both school staff and community partner interviewees mentioned that, without partnerships, students and families in these schools would not have had access to the robust suite of programs and services the FSCS program provided, and positive impacts would not have been seen.

Challenges to implementation

COVID-19 Pandemic

Several interviewees identified the COVID-19 pandemic as an implementation challenge. The pandemic caused schools to shift to a virtual format, hampering their ability to connect with students and families. Additionally, this virtual format disconnected staff and program partners, making it difficult to collaborate and develop proactive programming. As a result, interviewees reported that FSCS program implementation shifted, allowing them to respond to the immediate needs of students and families.

Student and family engagement

A community partner mentioned that misconceptions about tutoring may have affected middle school student engagement with this service. Another community partner noted challenges in reaching non-English speakers needing food pantry distribution and raising their awareness about this resource.

Partnerships

Interviewees noted that partnerships were largely facilitators of FSCS programming but did reflect upon how partnerships could be challenging for various reasons. The FSCS program brought together extensive community partners, that all have different organizational missions, goals, and time frames in which they tend to operate. School staff interviewees reflected that it can be challenging to align all partners and ensure that goals overlap and are feasible within the school day. Additionally, school staff interviewees reported that having community partners and JBNC staff co-located in the schools was helpful but required dedication from all parties to consistently define and refine roles responsibilities, and oversight to prevent confusion as to who was doing what.

Community partners also discussed partnerships as potential barriers to service provision in schools. Community partner interviewees felt they had to forge relationships with school administrators rather than connecting with them through JNBC. Some community partners, therefore, were present only in a selection of schools, based on whom they were able to contact, and felt this limited their ability to serve a wider network of students and families.

Changing needs

Interviewees also identified the changing student and family needs of students and families—resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and student population shifts that occurred with the IPS Rebuilding Stronger initiative—as a challenge. These changing needs required program and service reevaluation and the identification of new partners to address new programming needs. Despite a desire to meet these emerging needs, funding constraints or the inability to find appropriate service partners sometimes made this increasingly difficult.

PART 4.
OUTCOME EVALUATION

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

This section of the report presents outcome evaluation findings in alignment with the four domain areas that are a part of the FSCS logic model. These include early childhood, student, family, and culture outcomes. While the CRISP research team used one larger dataset (IPS student data) and one smaller dataset (JBNC adult program data) for the statistical analyses conducted as part of this evaluation, caregiver, JNBC staff, and organizational partner surveys related to outcomes the FSCS logic model addresses also informed its analyses.

ECE OUTCOMES

JNBC played an instrumental role in ensuring that ECE staff received professional development training and the Ages and Stages questionnaire (ASQ)—which is used to assess child social-emotional development—was administered in partner ECE centers. However, ASQ data and kindergarten-readiness outcome measures had not been shared with JNBC by the end of the program. Therefore, outcomes for 18 young children could not be part of the FSCS evaluation.

Because data-sharing mechanisms were still in the implementation process, outcomes related to increased parental engagement and community collaboration with FSCS families with children in ECE centers also could not be measured. However, as FSCS families were JBNC program participants, these factors are discussed as family area domain outcomes.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

CRISP researchers used an analysis of IPS student data from the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years to determine if FSCS programs had an impact on students attending these schools. This analysis compares student outcomes from FSCS schools to those of comparison IPS schools to understand if there is a difference between these attributable to FSCS programs. Because Longfellow and Washington Irving were added to the FSCS program during its final year, they were excluded from the analysis.

Four variables are summarized as a part of this analysis. These include three variables related to FSCS logic model outcomes—attendance, ILEARN math scores, and ILEARN English language arts (ELA) scores—and one predictor variable important to the statistical models, in- and out-of-school suspensions. These variables are plotted by both school type—FSCS and comparison groups—and by individual schools. In the analysis, students with attendance greater than zero are included. This data represents the entire school population, although it does not necessarily include every single student in those schools. Thus, any differences between FSCS and comparison groups, individual schools, and years represent actual differences and are not estimates.

Attendance and Suspensions

Student attendance and suspensions are important to this analysis because increased student attendance is an outcome in the logic model student domain area. Additionally, students are not learning in the classroom when they are absent from school or are suspended.

Attendance

Both the FSCS and comparison school groups had equivalent mean attendance rates, although FSCS schools had slightly lower attendance (Figure 27). Attendance in both groups improved slightly from the 2022—23 to 2023–24 school years. Because the differences in mean attendance rates were small, they are magnified in Figure 27 by the short y-axis range which begins at 80%.

FIGURE 27. Attendance rates by school year and school group

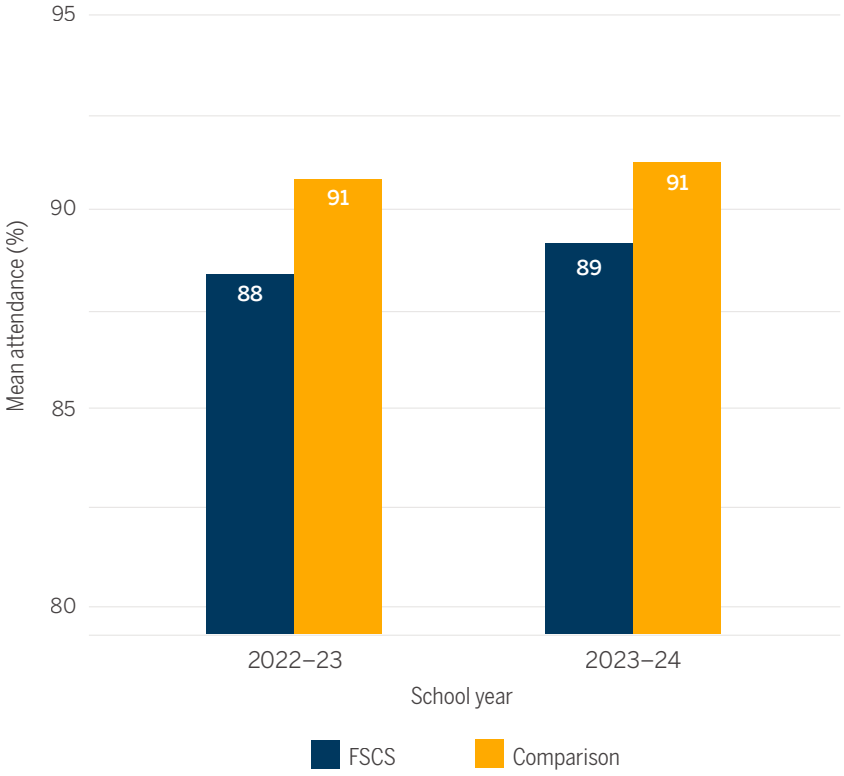
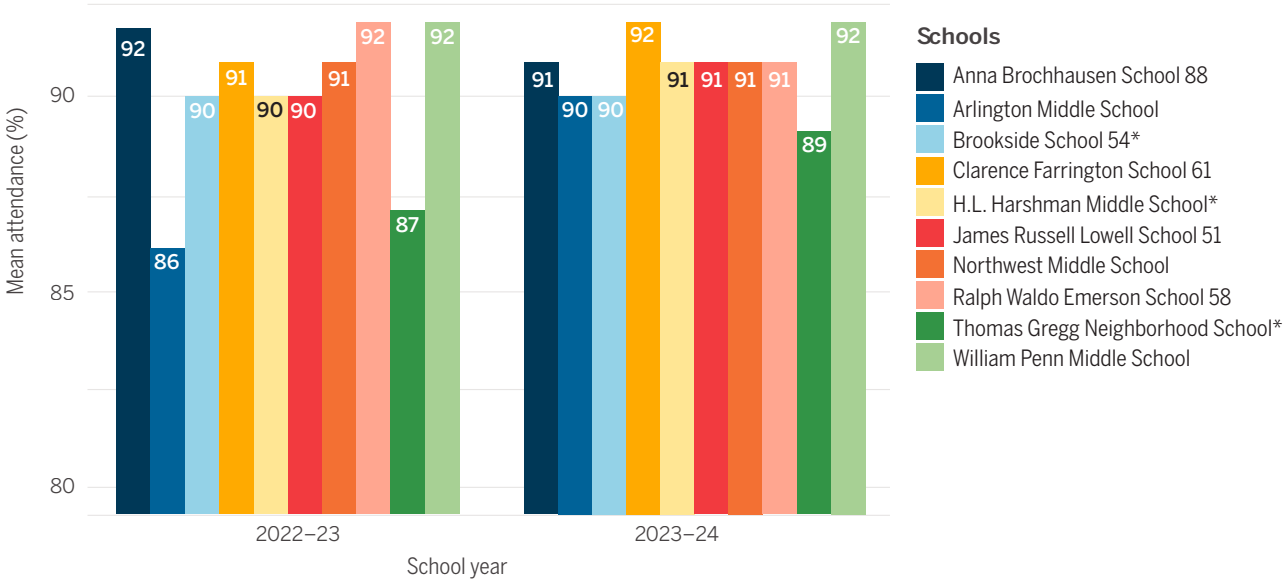


Figure 28 replicates Figure 27 but displays mean attendance rates for each of the 12 individual FSCS and comparison schools for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. Like Figure 27, because the differences in mean attendance rates were small, they are magnified by the short y-axis range, which begins at 80%.

Mean attendance rates vary by individual school. During the 2022–23 school year, Arlington had the lowest mean attendance rate, and during the 2023–24 school year, Thomas Gregg had the lowest mean attendance rate. During the 2022–23 school year, Anna Brochhausen had the highest mean attendance rate and during the 2023–24 school year, William Penn had the highest mean attendance rate.

FIGURE 28. Attendance rates by school year and individual school



Note: Schools with an asterisk (*) after the name are part of FSCS.

Suspensions

The following graphs (Figures 29 and Figure 30) display the mean number of suspensions for students in each group—FSCS and comparison schools—and school. These figures represent the sum of in-school and out-of-school suspensions for each student. The calculations included students with zero suspensions. Since most students do not have in-school or out-of-school suspensions, these means are small. For example, during the 2022–23 school year, the mean number of suspensions per student in all FSCS schools combined is 0.28, far less than one suspension per student. Across both school years, the FSCS group had higher suspension rates than the comparison school group, although both the FSCS and comparison groups saw declines in suspension rates from 2022–23 to 2023–24.

Anecdotally, school staff interviewees reported positive results from the attendance campaigns across schools. They noted that attendance rates improved, and chronic absenteeism decreased over time, and school staff interviewees felt their ability to engage and connect with parents supported these results.

"We've dramatically reduced from, like, 64% of our families were chronically absent at the height of the pandemic, and we've been able to get that down to 29%, 30%."
— School staff member

FIGURE 29. Suspensions by school year and school group (all students)

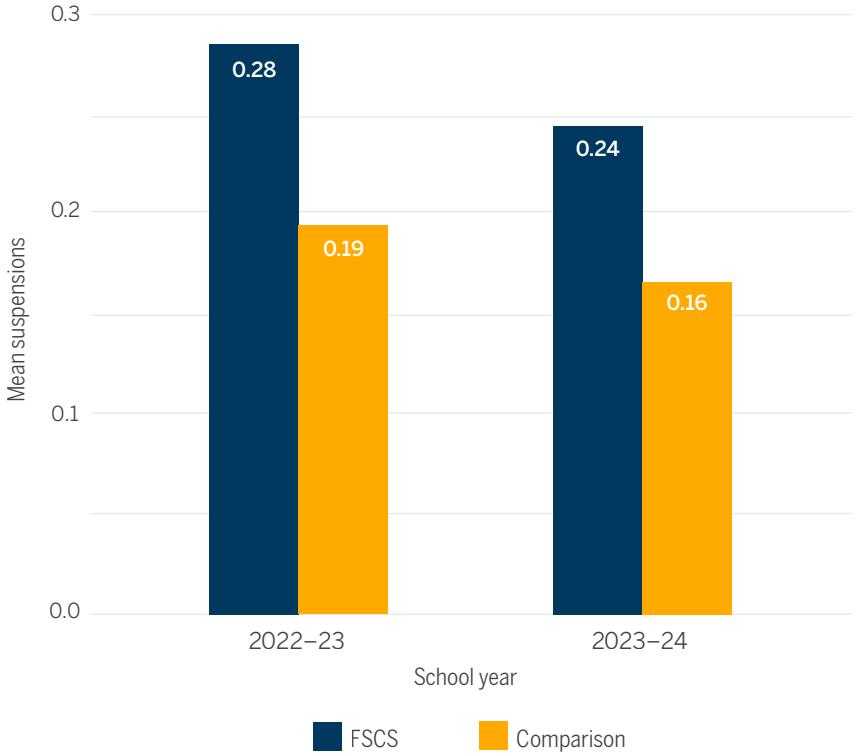
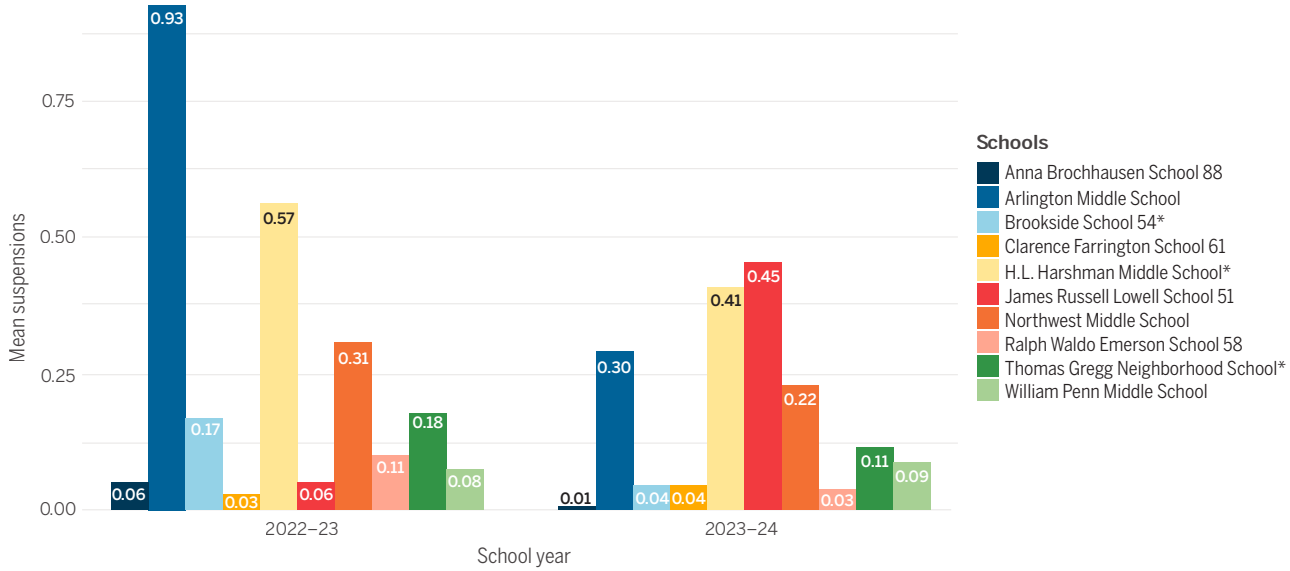


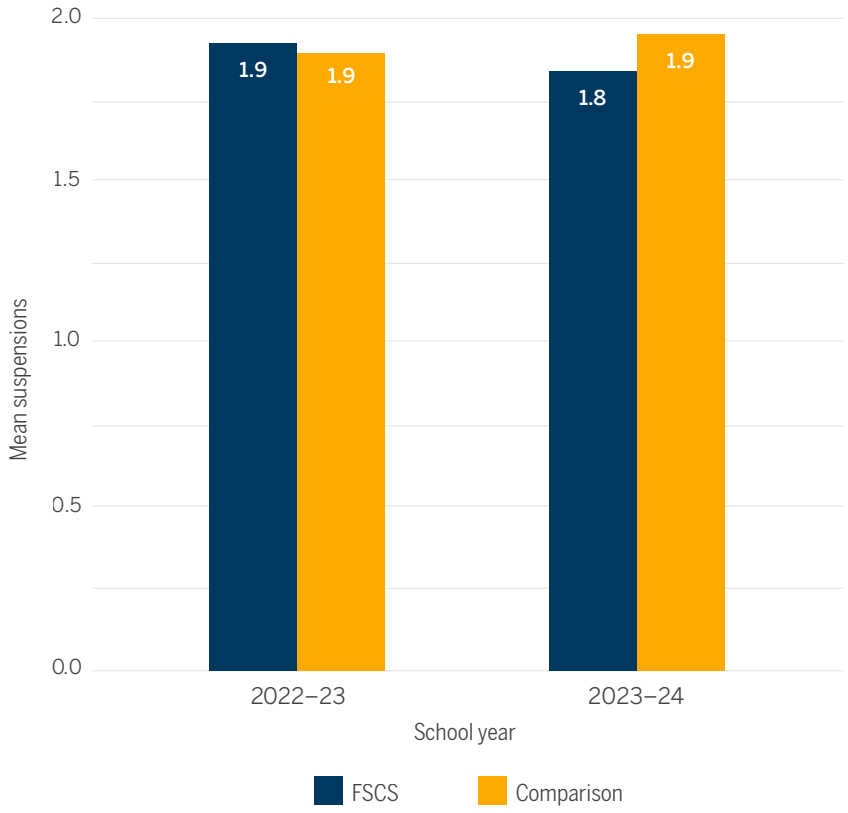
FIGURE 30. Suspensions by school year and individual school (all students)



Note: Schools with an asterisk (*) after the name are part of FSCS.

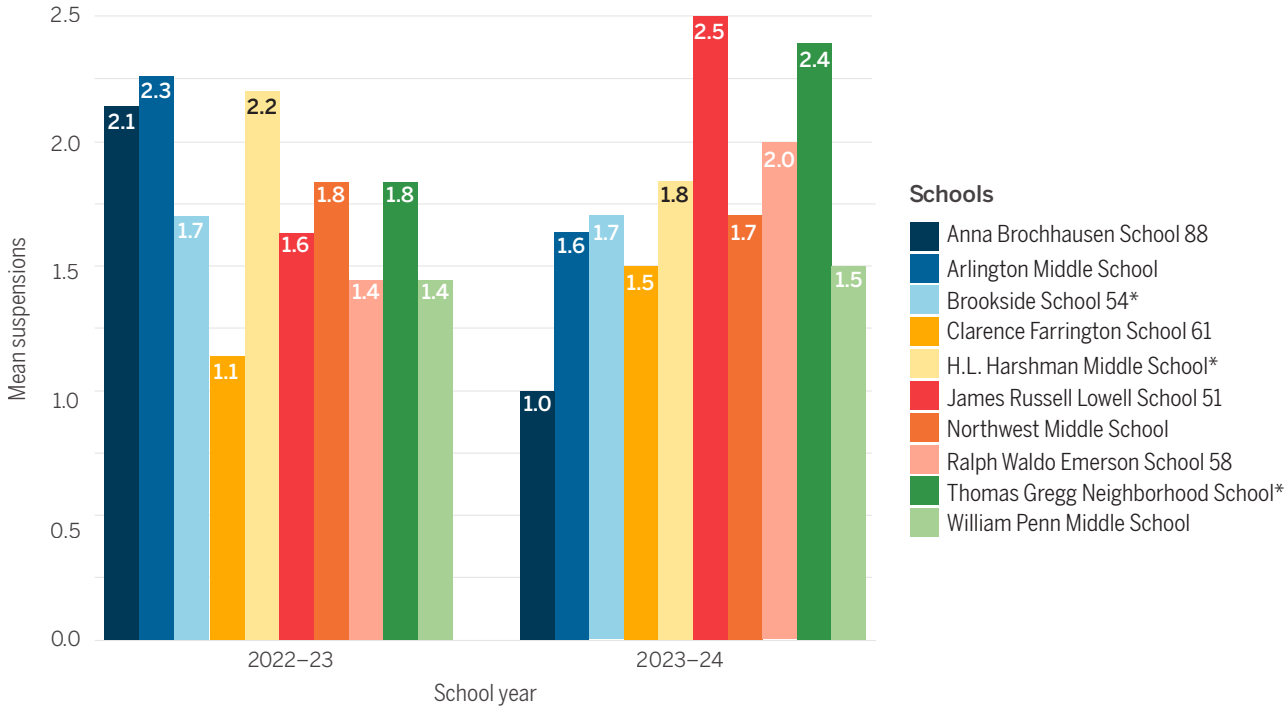
The next two graphs exclude the students with zero suspensions. These provide a different picture of the mean number of suspensions for those students who received suspensions versus the previous two figures that include students without suspensions. The FSCS and comparison school groups not only have closer rates of suspensions in Figure 31, but in 2023–24, comparison schools had higher mean suspensions in comparison to FSCS—an increase from the 2022–23 school year.

FIGURE 31. Suspensions by school year and school group (students with suspensions only)



The mean number of suspensions per student also varies by individual school (Figure 32). During the 2022–23 school year, Arlington had the greatest mean number of suspensions, while during the 2023–24 school year, Harshman had the greatest mean number of suspensions among students who received suspensions. During the 2022–23 school year, Clarence Farrington had the lowest mean number of suspensions, and during the 2023–24 school year, Anna Brochhausen had the lowest mean number of suspensions.

FIGURE 32. Suspensions by school year and individual school (students with suspensions only)



Note: Schools with an asterisk (*) after the name are part of FSCS.

ILEARN student achievement test scores

The Indiana Department of Education uses the Indiana Learning Evaluation and Assessment Readiness tests (ILEARN) as a summative assessment to track student outcomes related to academic achievement and growth. The CRISP team used the math and ELA scores from these tests to understand the differences in achievement between the FSCS and comparison school groups.

ILEARN math test scores

Figure 33 shows that ILEARN math scores improved at the FSCS and comparison school groups between the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years, although the FSCS group improved more. The graph demonstrates that the FSCS group started with substantially higher mean ILEARN math scores in 2022–23 compared to the comparison schools. Figure 34 displays mean ILEARN math scores for the individual schools. Because the differences in mean ILEARN math scores are small, they are magnified in Figures 33 and 34 by the short y-axis range, which begins at 6350.

FIGURE 33. ILEARN math scores by school year and school group

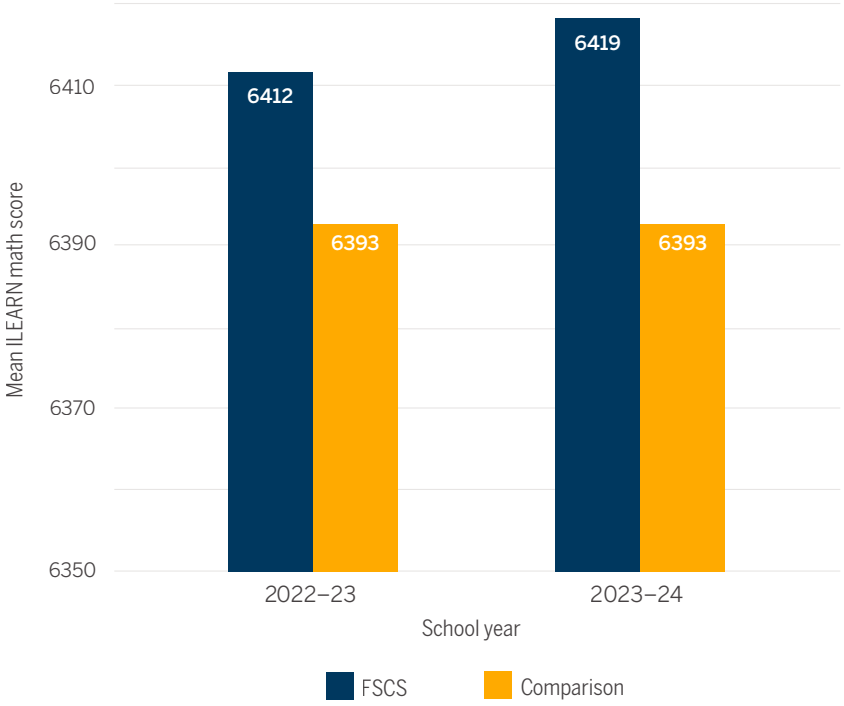
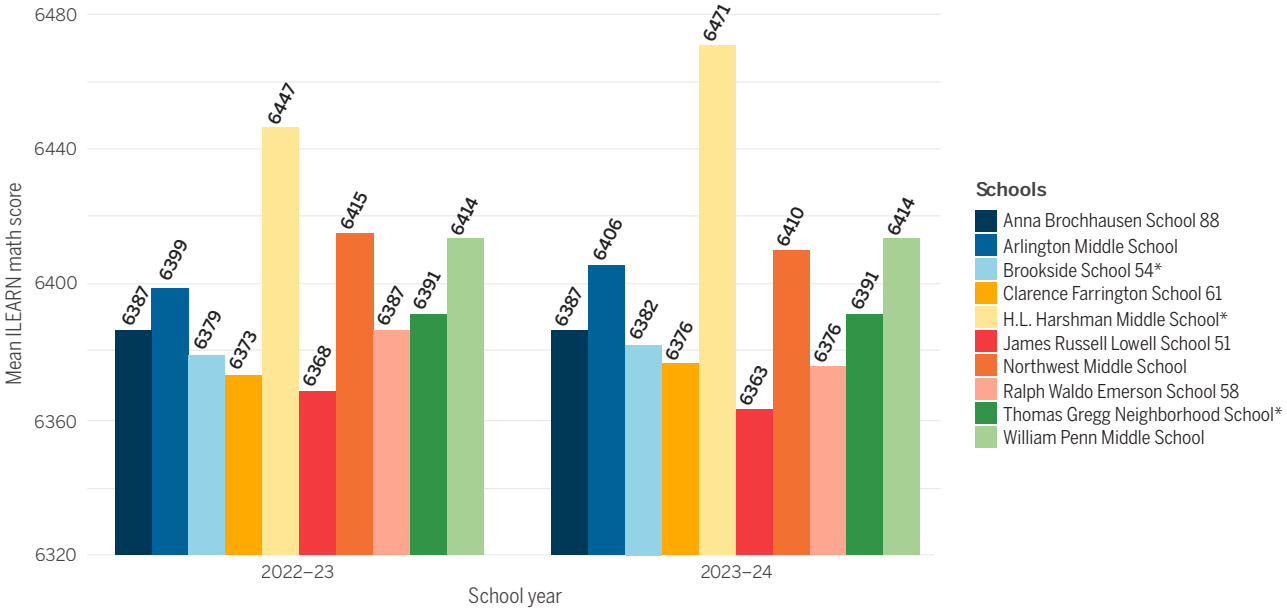


FIGURE 34. ILEARN math scores by school year and individual school



Note: Schools with an asterisk (*) after the name are part of FSCS.

ILEARN English Language Arts test scores

Figures 35 and 36 demonstrate changes in mean ILEARN ELA scores between the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years. Like the mean ILEARN math scores, the FSCS group mean ELA scores were substantially higher than the comparison school group in the 2022–23 school year. However, while the FSCS mean ELA scores slightly improved in the 2023–24 school year, the improvement in the comparison school group was greater. Because the differences in mean ILEARN ELA scores are small, they are magnified in Figures 35 and 36 by the short y-axis range, which begins at 5375.

FIGURE 35. ILEARN ELA scores by school year and school group

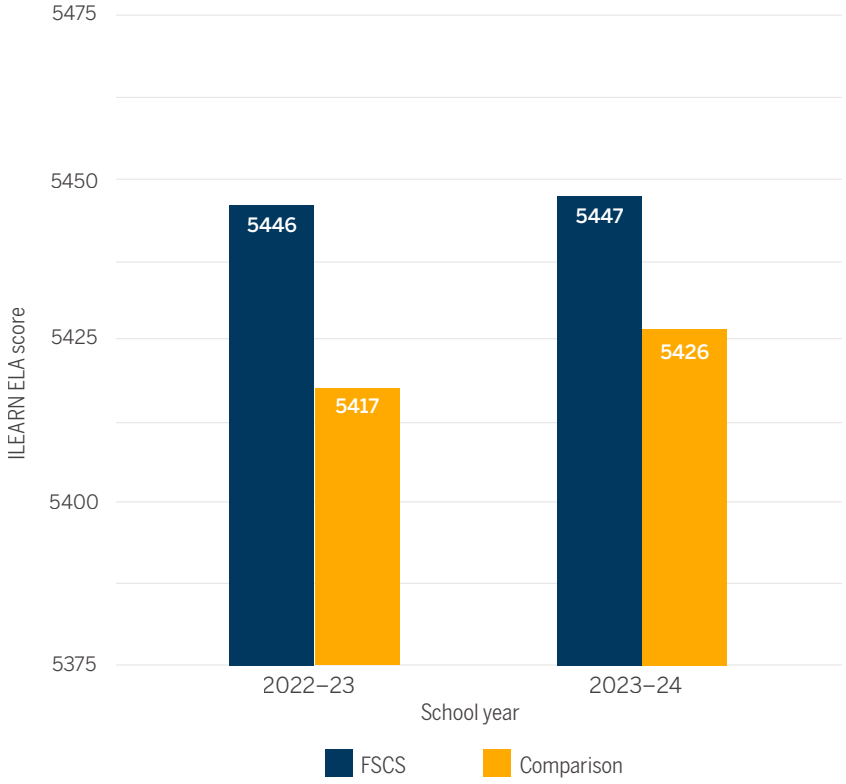
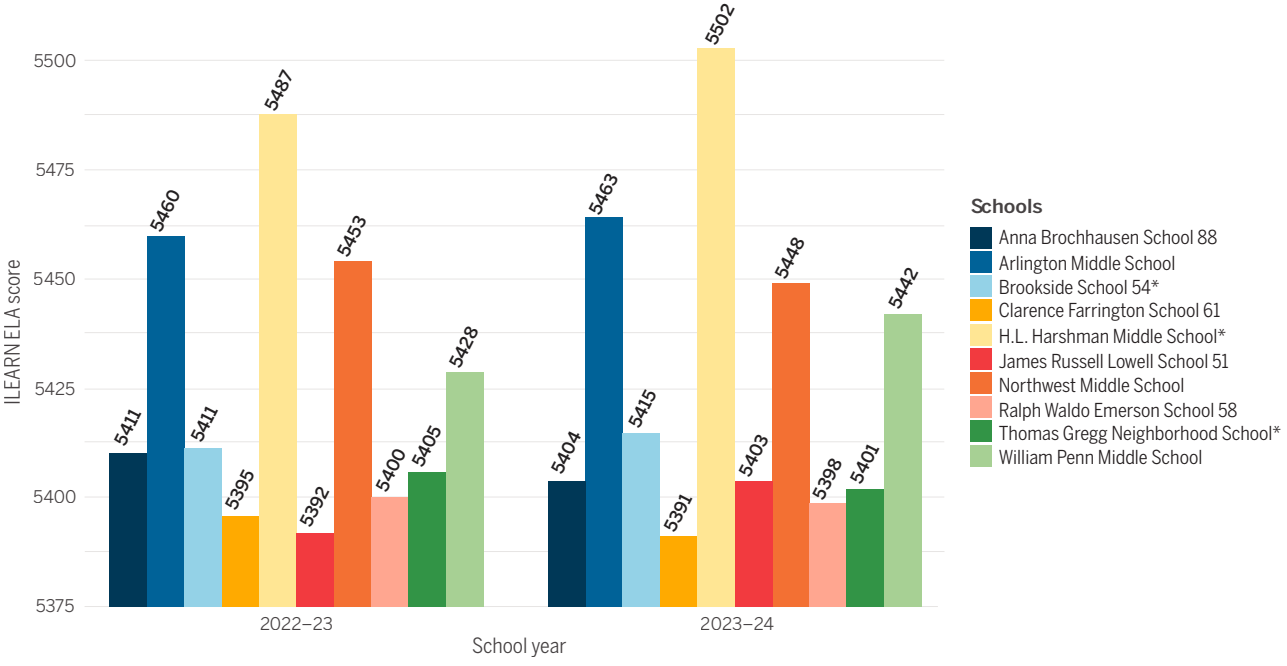


FIGURE 36. ILEARN ELA scores by school year and individual school



Note: Schools with an asterisk (*) after the name are part of FSCS.

Statistical analysis of student outcomes

The dual goals of statistical testing for student outcomes using IPS data were to first determine whether there were differences in outcomes between the FSCS and comparison school groups from the 2022–23 to the 2023–24 school year and then to show what individual-level factors predicted those outcomes.

Data inclusion and exclusion

Because Longfellow and Washington Irving were added to the FSCS program during its final year, they were excluded from these analyses. This left three remaining FSCS and seven comparison schools in the analysis. While five years of data was available for FSCS (2019–24), only two years of data was available for comparison schools (2022–24). Therefore, only the change between the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years could be included in this analysis.

There was a wide range in attendance rates among students, including under 70%. Given the presumed impact of attendance on school performance, including ILEARN scores, only those students with attendance rates greater than 70% were included in this analysis (94% of students). While it is important to see the impact of low attendance rates in the analysis, these can legitimately be considered outliers with separate causal impact mechanisms on test scores, such as prolonged illness or severe home difficulties.

ILEARN test score outliers also were excluded, which removed 16% of student cases.

Finally, since the testing outcome measures were the difference between starting and ending scores, students were excluded if they did not have scores in both 2022–23 and 2023–24 (50% of 8,308 observations). This left 2,096 remaining cases for analysis from a total of 4,192 year-cases, after duplicate records were removed. Each case in this dataset, therefore, represented one student with score data from both years.

Analysis

Since all the outcome variables—attendance and ILEARN test scores—were measured as continuous, linear multiple regression was used to model these relationships. Student-level data was stored remotely on the secure IU Research Desktop system (Linux) and was analyzed using R version 4.2.1, a programming language used for statistical computing and data visualization.

The demographic predictor variables were cast as dummy variables: free or reduced lunch or not, English language learner or not, race/ethnicity, and gender. A race or ethnicity variable was defined as white, Hispanic, and Black/other. Except the attendance rate variable—which was converted into a transformed absence rate—all other outcome variables for the following statistical models met the assumptions necessary to use a linear regression model.

To interpret the predictor variables in Table 16 below, the parentheses contain the unstated reference group—the category listed compared to the category used as the predictor variable. For example, in the ILEARN Math score change Table 16, "Comparison (FSCS)" has a standardized beta coefficient of −0.13, which implies that being in a comparison group school predicts a lower Math score change from 2022–23 to 2023–24, compared to being in an FSCS school. Similarly, being male predicts a lower math score change than being female.

ILEARN math score analysis

Changes in ILEARN math scores were measured in 10 schools (7 comparison, 3 FSCS). The strongest predictors of math test score changes were school type (FSCS school group versus comparison school group), gender, previous NWEA math score—a formative test used to assess student progress during the school year—and whether the student had been suspended (Table 16). The three strongest of these scores were used to create a reduced model including only the statistically significant predictors from the full model. Neither model had an adjusted R^2 greater than 0.03, implying that these models explain about

3% in the variation in ILEARN math score changes—unmeasured variables were far more dominant in predicting changes in math scores during the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years.

While both models and some predictors were statistically significant, this was mostly due to the large sample size—it does not mean any of these variables is a meaningful predictor, including whether the student was part of a FSCS versus a comparison school.

TABLE 16. ILEARN math score regression results

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	FULL MODEL BETA COEFFICIENTS (STANDARD ERROR)	REDUCED MODEL BETA COEFFICIENTS (STANDARD ERROR)
Comparison (FSCS)	-0.13 (2.9) ***	-0.12 (2.9) ***
Male (female)	-0.05 (2.9)	
Black (white)	-0.02 (5.2)	
Hispanic (white)	-0.07 (6.1)	
English language learner (not ELL)	0.03 (4.5)	
Free or reduced-price lunch (not FRPL)	-0.02 (4.1)	
NWEA math score	0.12 (0.2) ***	0.12 (0.2) ***
Suspensions	-0.07 (2.6) *	-0.06 (2.5) *
Attendance	0.01 (0.3)	
Adjusted R^2	0.03	0.03
F-ratio	5.3 (9,1222)***	13.9 (3,1230)***
n	1,232	1,234

Codes for statistical significance: 0 '***', 0.001 '**', 0.01 '*', 0.05 '.'

ILEARN ELA score analysis

As with the ILEARN math scores, CRISP researchers measured changes in ILEARN ELA scores from the 10 schools and tested against various individual-level predictors. The strongest predictors of ELA test score changes were school type, previous NWEA ELA score, and whether the student was suspended (Table 17). These three predictors were used to create a reduced model. Neither model had an adjusted R^2 greater than 0.01, implying that these models explain about 1% in the variation in ILEARN ELA score changes.

Like the ILEARN math score changes, none of these variables were meaningful predictors of ILEARN ELA score changes, despite the model and several predictors being statistically significant.

TABLE 17. ILEARN ELA score regression results

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	FULL MODEL BETA COEFFICIENTS (STANDARD ERROR)	REDUCED MODEL BETA COEFFICIENTS (STANDARD ERROR)
Comparison (FSCS)	0.07 (3) *	0.07 (2.9) *
Male (female)	-0.04 (3)	
Black (white)	-0.04 (5.3)	
Hispanic (white)	-0.03 (6.2)	
English language learner (not ELL)	-0.03 (4.6)	
Free or reduced-price lunch (not FRPL)	-0.01 (4.1)	
NWEA ELA score	0.06 (0.1) *	0.07 (0.1) *
Suspensions	-0.08 (2.7) **	-0.08 (2.6) **
Attendance	0.01 (0.3)	
Adjusted R^2	0.01	0.01
F-ratio	2.8 (9,1220)***	7.2 (3,1228)***
n	1,230	1,232

Codes for statistical significance: 0 '***', 0.001 '**', 0.01 '*', 0.05 '.'

Student absences analysis

CRISP used all student observations from 2022–23 and 2023–24 for the same 10 schools as the ILEARN math and ELA test score models to understand student and school characteristics that impact attendance. They removed duplicates from the dataset so the same student could be in the data multiple times from different years, but not from the same year.

Because the attendance rate data is significantly skewed and thus could not be used as an outcome variable in a linear regression model, the transformed student absence rate was used instead. Student absence rates were calculated as the inverse of the attendance rates. Absence rates were then transformed taking a log (+1), which resulted in a reasonably normally distributed variable that could be analyzed with a linear regression model.

All available student demographic variables were used as predictor variables, as well as the number of in- and out-of-school suspensions. School type was also included—whether the student attended an FSCS or a comparison school.

The strongest predictors of change in student absence rates were school type, being of the Black race, being an English language learner, and whether the student was suspended (Table 18). CRISP used these four predictors, in addition to Hispanic ethnicity, to create a reduced model. Neither model had an adjusted R^2 greater than 0.06, implying that these models explain about 6% in the variation in school absence changes.

Like the ILEARN score changes, none of these variables is a meaningful predictor of student absence rates, despite the model and several predictors being statistically significant.

TABLE 18. School absence regression results

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	FULL MODEL BETA COEFFICIENTS (STANDARD ERROR)	REDUCED MODEL BETA COEFFICIENTS (STANDARD ERROR)
Comparison (FSCS)	-0.03 (0) **	-0.03 (0) **
Male (female)	0.02 (0)	
Black (white)	0.04 (0) *	0.04 (0) *
Hispanic (white)	-0.02 (0)	-0.01 (0)
English language learner (not ELL)	-0.1 (0) ***	-0.1 (0) ***
Free or reduced-price lunch (not FRPL)	0 (0)	
Suspensions	0.17 (0) ***	0.17 (0) ***
Adjusted R^2	0.06	0.06
F-ratio	72.8 (7,8377)***	72.8 (7,8377)***
n	8,385	8,441

Codes for statistical significance: 0 '***', 0.001 '**', 0.01 '*', 0.05 '.'

FAMILY OUTCOMES

FSCS outcomes in the logic model's family domain area originate from JBNC program data and surveys of caregivers, JBNC staff, and community partners. These pertain to the impact of JBNC and community partner programs and services on FSCS families. The analysis of this data permits understanding of short- and medium-term FSCS outcomes.

JBNC program data outcomes

This analysis used three groups of variables: a) changes in Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM) measurements across various domains as outcome variables; b) participation in workshops or the Housing Stability for Student Success (HSSS) program as predictor variables; c) and the number of days between the first and last responses to the periodically administered ASSM survey by program participants as a control variable.

Changes in several ASSM domains—housing, employment, income, parenting skills, family/social relationships, and community involvement—were tested in 32 models with different combinations of predictor variables to determine if the predictor variables explain variation in the outcome variables. The number of days between the first and last ASSM survey measurements was not statistically significant in any model. Workshop participation was only significant in one model.

One hundred seven unduplicated FSCS participants had at least two ASSM domain measures included in the model. This sample size limited the number of predictor variables that could be in the model to three.

Of the 32 models tested, five with ASSM income or employment domains as outcome variables were significant at $p<0.05$. Three models with ASSM housing or employment domains as outcome variables were significant at $p<0.10$.

Analysis

Since all outcome variables are measured as the change between the first and last ASSM survey taken by program participants, they are continuous variables. Thus, linear multiple regression was used to model these relationships. This individual-level participant data was stored remotely on the secure IU Research Desktop system (Linux) and was analyzed using R version 4.2.1, a programming language used for statistical computing and data visualization.

Housing outcomes

CRISP researchers calculated changes in the ASSM housing domain by subtracting the participant's first intake ASSM measurement from the last measurement on record. In all domains thus calculated, some increased and some decreased: score changes ranged from −4 to +4, with a mean of +0.2 and median of 0, indicating little change across participants. Of the 11 ASSM housing change models tested, only one reached statistical significance ($p<0.1$). However, none of the predictor variables—HSSS participation, change in ASSM income domain scores, or change in ASSM employment domains scores—were statistically significant. The adjusted R^2 of the model is 0.04, indicating this model explains less than 4% of the variance in changes in the ASSM housing domain.

TABLE 19. ASSM housing domain regression results

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	BETA COEFFICIENT (STANDARD ERROR)
HSSS participation	0.06 (0.24)
ASSM income domain score change	0.17 (0.11)
ASSM employment domain score change	0.11 (0.09)
Adjusted R^2	0.04
F-ratio	2.4 (3, 102)
n	106

Codes for statistical significance: 0 '***', 0.001 '**', 0.01 '*', 0.05 '.'

Other housing change models included the following predictor variables: days between ASSM measurements; participation in HSSS; length of time in HSSS; changes in ASSM income or employment domains; and participation in CWF or income-specific workshops. None of these models was statistically significant.

Employment outcomes

Changes in ASSM employment domain scores were calculated by subtracting participants' first ASSM measurement from their last measurement on record. Score changes ranged from −4 to +4, with a mean of -0.03 and median of 0, indicating little change across participants. Of the seven ASSM employment domain models, the only statistically significant predictor variable was change in the ASSM income domain (Table 20). Other predictor variables measured were changes in the ASSM housing domain and ASSM childcare domain scores; the number of days between ASSM measurements; and participation in employment-related CWF workshops. None of these predictor variables were statistically significant, and only marginally improved the model's adjusted R^2. The model in Table 20 has an adjusted R2 of 0.23, which means that the model explains 23% of the variation in the ASSM employment outcome variable. However, improvement in employment outcomes predicted by improvement in income outcomes is likely related to these variables being highly correlated. The most plausible predicted relationship would be employment predicting income.

TABLE 20. ASSM employment domain regression results

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	BETA COEFFICIENT (STANDARD ERROR)
Employment workshop participation	-0.09 (0.8)
ASSM income domain score change	0.43 (0.14) ***
ASSM housing domain score change	0.12 (0.14)
Adjusted R^2	0.23
F-ratio	7.8 (3,66)
n	70

Codes for statistical significance: 0 '***', 0.001 '**', 0.01 '*', 0.05 '.'

Income outcomes

Changes in ASSM income domain scores ranged from −3 to +3, with a mean of +0.3 and median of 0, indicating little change across participants. Of the seven ASSM income change models tested, only two predictor variables were statistically significant: changes in ASSM employment domain scores and ASSM childcare domain scores. Other predictor variables tested included change in ASSM housing domain scores; the number of days between the first and last ASSM measurements taken; and participation in CWF or income-related workshops.

The best model predicting ASSM income domain score change (Table 21) had an R^2 value of 0.25. Thus, positive changes in the ASSM employment and childcare domains predicted 25% of the variation in changes in the ASSM income domain.

TABLE 21. ASSM income domain regression results

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	BETA COEFFICIENT (STANDARD ERROR)
ASSM employment domain score change score	0.47 (0.07) ***
ASSM childcare domain score change	0.18 (0.06) *
Adjusted R^2	0.25
F-ratio	18.6 (2,101)
n	104

Codes for statistical significance: 0 '***', 0.001 '**', 0.01 '*', 0.05 '.'

Family and community outcomes

CRISP tested three models predicting change in the ASSM parenting skills domain score. However, none were significant. Predictor variables included in the model were changes in ASSM employment and income domain scores; the number of days between the first and last ASSM measurement; and participation in a Parent Café or CWF workshop. Changes in ASSM parenting skills domain scores ranged from −1 to +3, with a mean of +0.05, and a median of 0, indicating little change across participants.

The research team tested two models predicting change in the ASSM family and social relationships domain scores, neither of which was significant. Predictor variables included in the model were the number of days between the first and last ASSM measurements; change in the ASSM income domain score; and participation in either CWF or family or social engagement-related workshops. Changes in family and social relationship scores ranged from −3 to +4, with a mean of +0.2, and a median of 0, indicating little change across participants.

Researchers tested two models predicting change in the ASSM community involvement score, neither of which was significant. The predictor variables included the number of days between the first and last ASSM measurements; change in ASSM income domain scores; and participation in either CWF or community-related workshops. Changes in community involvement scores ranged from −2 to 3, with a mean of +0.1, and a median of 0, indicating little change across participants.

Caregiver survey outcomes

A total of 14 respondents agreed to participate in the caregiver survey and completed more than 5% of survey questions. However, different questions have different response rates as survey takers likely skipped questions that were not applicable to their situation. For instance, if a caregiver did not receive financial services they may not have responded to related questions or may have selected "not applicable."

Financial health

JBNC's most common services include financial coaching, career coaching, and social capital development. Four of 8 caregivers surveyed responded positively that their financial coach helped them make a good plan that has helped them with

their finances, while one respondent (13%) disagreed. Additionally, 5 out of 9 respondents (55%) felt they could manage their debts more effectively, while one respondent (11%) disagreed. A greater number of survey respondents, 6 out of 9 (67%) responded positively that their financial coach helped them with their career development, with 5 of 9 strongly agreeing with the statement.

Physical health and nutrition

As part of the FSCS model, many JBNC services target physical health improvements. When asked whether JBNC services helped them understand how to take care of their physical health, 5 out of 9 (55%) caregivers who responded to this survey question answered positively. A majority of respondents strongly agreed, while one (11%) disagreed with the prompt. Seven percent of 10 (70%) total caregivers agreed that they learned how to take care of their child's physical health through their child's school.

The definition of physical health includes physical activity and nutrition. Seven out of 10 caregiver survey respondents reported that they are more physically active after receiving health and wellbeing services, and six agreed that they have learned something new about healthy eating from FSCS partners such as Gleaners Foodbank and Common Threads. Caregivers were asked additional questions to understand how they are applying what they learned about healthy eating since enrolling in JBNC services. On average, 6 of 11 caregivers reported that they or another household member prepare healthy meals for the family daily and 3 of 11 reported they did this 3 to 6 times per week. Two of 11 respondents reported preparing a healthy meal one to two times a week. Additionally, of 11 respondents, 7 agreed that their family buys more healthy foods from the grocery store. However, of 10 respondents, 2 agreed that their family prepares more healthy foods at mealtime or snack time. One respondent disagreed with each of the previous two prompts.

School staff interviewees observed an increased use of the schools' food pantries and more parent attendance at school events and Parent Cafés. One community partner noted how nutrition education had led to requests for the school library to stock more cookbooks.

> *"The librarian had written an email to the principal because all the kids were coming into library, and they want cookbooks. So I feel like that's a big win."*
> *– Community partner*

Mental and behavioral health

For a holistic approach to good health, healthcare must include mental and behavioral health services. Caregivers were asked about their experience with specific mental health partners in the survey. Seven of 10 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that Firefly Children and Family Alliance helped them understand how to improve their mental health.

Social capital

Social capital development is a key component of the FSCS model and has a determinant effect on family awareness of community resources. Five out of 9 caregiver respondents strongly agreed and one agreed when asked whether they had developed new relationships with other families since attending Parent Cafés. Regarding events hosted by their child's school, 7 of 9 survey respondents agreed that these have helped them improve their parenting skills and 7 of 11 respondents agreed that they have become more involved in their child's education as a result. One caregiver strongly disagreed when asked whether events hosted by their child's school have improved their involvement in their child's education. Additionally, 6 out of 9 caregivers surveyed agreed that they knew of more local resources in the community to help their family since enrolling in JBNC services, while one disagreed.

Half of 12 caregivers who responded to the survey reported that they did not attend any Parent in Touch (PIT) days during the 2023–24 school year. Two reported attending one to three PIT days each. No caregiver survey respondents attended all four PIT days.

Out-of-school activities

Of all out-of-school activities listed in the survey, half of the 10 caregiver respondents reported that their child participated in after-school meals and three reported participating in homework stations during the 2023–24 school year. Two of 10 respondents participated in cooking classes and other nutrition and physical health services each, and one participated in extracurricular activities and accessed mental health resources outside of school hours during the 2023–24 school year. Some children participated in multiple activities. No respondents reported that their child participated in ceramics class or Common Threads during the 2023–24 school year.

Seven of the 11 total respondents (64%) selected "neither agree nor disagree" on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree when asked if their child's grades had improved and whether their child felt more supported by their peers since participating in activities outside of school hours. Only four agreed with each prompt. Six of 11 caregiver respondents selected "neither agree not disagree," and 5 agreed when asked if the services offered at their child's school improved their child's mental health.

The caregiver survey provided a list of reasons that could cause a child to be absent from school and prompted respondents to select the most appropriate ones for each of their children, if applicable. Survey responses to this question represented 21 children. During the 2023–24 school year, 10 of the 21 children represented in the survey reportedly missed school due to a lack of transportation to and from school. Eight were absent because they lacked clean clothing, 9 because they lacked shoes, and 8 because they lacked personal hygiene products. Five of 11 were absent because they lacked weather-appropriate clothing, such as a coat, hat, or boots.

JBNC staff and community partner survey outcomes

JBNC staff (n=4) and community partners (n=6) who responded to surveys about the FSCS program both agreed that students or families used FSCS-related services more because of community partnerships. They also agreed student or family needs were better addressed because of these partnerships.

CULTURE OUTCOMES

The remaining FSCS outcomes relate to the program's goal of promoting system change related to the full service community schools model. While this domain area does not have traditional outcome measures like the other areas, survey responses from JBNC staff and community partners, as well as interview data from school staff and community partners permits an understanding of the extent to which this change took place during the program.

Impact of partnerships on system change

When asked if FSCS partners including school administrators maintained a shared vision about fostering a community school model, all community partner (n=5) and JBNC staff (n=3) survey respondents agreed (Table 22). JBNC plays an important role in facilitating collaboration between schools and community partners. Four community partner respondents (80%) and all three JBNC staff respondents believed that their organization and school administrators understood each other's roles by the end of the FSCS grant period. Additionally, the average respondent agreed that administrators welcomed their organization's involvement in the schools.

In response to whether partnerships between JBNC, the schools, and other community organizations continued since the FSCS grant ended, community partner respondents (n=5) were mixed, and their average responses were ambivalent (neither agree nor disagree). All community partner (n=6) and JBNC staff respondents (n=3) on average agreed that collaboration between JBNC, community partner organizations, and the schools allowed for more proactive efforts to meet student and family needs.

In contrast, all JBNC staff members who answered the question (n=3) agreed or strongly agreed that partnerships between JBNC, the school, and other community partner organizations continued after FSCS grant ended and that collaboration between the three entities allowed for more proactive efforts to meet student and family needs.

Five out of 6 community partner survey respondents agreed that students and families recognized the school as a place where they could be connected to various activities and programs. All community partner survey respondents (n=5) believed that FSCS partnerships contributed to this.

TABLE 22. Impacts of collaboration on systems change

SURVEY QUESTION	JBNC STAFF AVERAGE RESPONSE	COMMUNITY PARTNER AVERAGE RESPONSE
FSCS partners and school staff maintained a shared vision about fostering a community school model.	Agree (n=3)	Agree (n=5)
Partnerships between JBNC, the school, and other community partners have continued since the FSCS grant ended.	Agree (n=3)	Neither agree nor disagree (n=5)
Collaboration between JBNC, the school, and other community partners allowed for more proactive efforts to meet students' and/or their families' needs.	Agree (n=3)	Agree (n=5)
FSCS partnerships contributed to community recognition of the school as a place where students and/or their families could receive or be connected to a variety of activities and programs.	Strongly agree (n=3)	Agree (n=5)

School staff and community partner interviewees echoed this perception. School staff interviewees felt the community perception of the school shifted over the grant period, potentially because the schools have more robust and consistent services. School staff interviewees reported that families are more likely to recognize the school as a safe place to access resources. However, interviewees noted that families may not recognize this as an FSCS program result. School staff and community partner interviews reflected that intentional relationship building in connection to the FSCS grant contributed to changing perceptions of the schools among students and families.

> *"They [parents] want to send their kids here and they feel good about that. I think our families see that kids are in safe space. They're [students] in a school, they're part of full service community school. So they [the school staff] care about us. And they care about our kids just beyond grades and academic data."*
>
> *— School staff member*

PART 5.
CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

This report section summarizes FSCS goal attainment and recommendations to improve future community school programming.

PROGRAM GOAL ATTAINMENT

To determine the degree of goal attainment for each program goal, findings from the implementation and outcome evaluation sections of this report are used as evidence. Researchers used the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Tiers of Evidence within each goal to determine the level of empirical support for different aspects of the FSCS program.[30]

Goal A

The first goal of the JBNC FSCS program was to develop and implement high-quality programs to ensure academic success in early childhood and among school-age children. The following sections provide updates on progress in relation to the early childhood education and school-age student domains.

ECE domain area

The FSCS grant funded professional development training for ECE staff members working with children. The intended impact of this funding was to maintain or improve the quality of care of young children served by the program. ECE outcomes as part of the FSCS program provide a rationale for evidence of success according to the ESSA Tiers of Evidence.

Outcome data regarding the direct impact on young children—including developmental gains, kindergarten readiness, and social-emotional learning and understanding—was not available from childcare providers. limiting the analysis of these outcomes. When data sharing between JBNC and ECE partners is implemented fully, the relationship between these outcomes and child ECE attendance can be tested.

Other data collected for this evaluation provide insights. Analysis of JBNC adult program data found that stable childcare and employment played a small role in predicting the income of adult participants. While parental engagement could not be addressed specifically with ECE data, it was addressed in the family domain area outcomes. Those results appear in the discussion of Goal x below.

Student domain area

While statistical models comparing differences between ILEARN math and ELA score changes in FSCS and comparison schools were statistically significant, the predictor variables of these models explain very little of the change in math and ELA test scores in these groups. This suggests that unmeasured variables explained most of the change in math and ELA scores between the 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years. Differences in changes in student absences between FSCS and comparison schools had similar results. Thus, statistically significant differences between FSCS and comparison schools were not meaningful, as their ability to predict student outcomes was extremely limited.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent influx in federal funding to alleviate declining test scores likely affected changes in ILEARN test scores in complex ways. Additionally, the IPS Rebuilding Stronger initiative changed the landscape of schools on the Near Eastside of Indianapolis, introducing high-ability classrooms at Harshman and Washington Irving schools during the FSCS program period. Absent these confounding factors, FSCS might outperform comparison schools.

Goal B

The second goal of the JBNC FSCS program was to develop and implement family and community engagement programming and supports to ensure financial and social stability and high levels of engagement among families.

JBNC and its school and community partners offered a variety of programs and services to families with students attending FSCS schools. While some were developed specifically in response to the FSCS program, others were leveraged using existing programs.

FSCS produced some promising evidence regarding changes in participant income outcomes.[C] When changes in the ASSM employment and childcare domain scores were used to predict changes in the ASSM income domain scores of FSCS adult participants, changes in the employment and childcare variables significantly predicted changes in the income variable. While the regression model did not directly incorporate participation in specific JBNC programming, it demonstrated significant changes over time related to participant income while engaged with JBNC.

Goal C

The third goal of the JBNC FSCS program was to develop and implement services and supports to ensure a high degree of health and wellness of families and students attending FSCS schools.

Many caretakers responded positively to survey questions about their health and wellness.[D] More than half of caregivers reported that JBNC services helped them understand how to take care of their physical health and a majority agreed that they learned how to care for their child's physical health through their child's school. Caregivers reported applying what they learned from FSCS programming about healthy eating by preparing healthy meals—more than half reported doing this daily. Additionally, a majority of caregivers agreed or strongly agreed that an FSCS community partner, Firefly Children and Family Alliance, helped them understand how to improve their mental health.

Goal D

The fourth goal of the JBNC FSCS program was to develop and implement a culture promoting policy and systems change among IEAZ partners using the Community School Systems Standards.

JNBC staff and community partners agreed on average that FSCS partners and school administrators maintained a shared vision about fostering a community school model. JBNC staff indicated that partnerships between JBNC, the schools, and other community partners have continued since the end of the FSCS grant. Community partners gave a mix of responses to this statement. Both JBNC staff and community partners agreed that collaboration between JBNC, the school, and community partners permitted more proactive efforts to meet student and family needs.

School staff and community partners interviewed about their experiences with FSCS noted that integrating JBNC staff in schools benefited students and families. Some partners suggested that more frequent communication and stronger shared decision making could strengthen the relationships among all FSCS partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are designed to enhance the effectiveness and impact of the FSCS program. Feedback from school staff and partners across the implementation and outcome evaluation informed each recommendation. These recommendations build upon FSCS program leadership's existing work and align with the core pillars of the community schools model.

[C] JBNC program data did not have sufficient participant cases—a minimum of 350—to meet the ESSA Tiers of Evidence standard for moderate or strong evidence for success,

[D] The sample size for the caregivers survey, n=9 to 11, was not big enough for statistical testing.

Prioritize and practice collaborative leadership and decision making

Collaborative leadership and decision making among FSCS program collaborators aligns with a core pillar of the community schools model—collaborative leadership and practice. It is critical to ensuring that all stakeholders, including the community, are accountable to each other and the program's success. This FSCS principle also ensures that the program is tailored to meet the needs of the students and families it was developed to serve. During interviews, school staff and partners identified the need to enhance collaborative leadership and decision making as an area needing growth. Interviewees noted that collaborative leadership and decision making must be a clear goal accompanied by consistent action.

Engage community partners early and often

The identification and inclusion of community partners early in the grant process, ideally in advance of grant writing or application development, would empower partners to be actively involved across all program phases. The continued incorporation of these community partners—through joint planning sessions, workshops, and brainstorming meetings—also allows for acknowledgment of collaborators' expertise and insights. Engaging partners early can ensure that resources—both material and financial—are allocated efficiently and effectively throughout the grant application and program period.

Additionally, as new partners are brought on throughout the program, it is important to onboard and orient each of them thoroughly to avoid future confusion or program goal misalignment. Developing comprehensive partner onboarding materials that include detailed information about the program's goals, mission, and each collaborators' role may be helpful. Periodic updates of these materials may also be needed with changes to the program and evolving needs. Clearly communicating the program's goals while acknowledging the value and impact of each partner's contribution will allow community partners to understand how their involvement makes a difference.

Clarify roles and definitions

Defining and communicating the specific duties, expectations, and reporting hierarchies for each program role also can increase collaborative leadership and decision making among all partners. These materials must be updated as the program evolves to address stakeholders' needs.

Implement regular feedback mechanisms to gather input from all partners

Shared leadership and decision making among schools and their partners are fundamental components of the community schools model. Enhanced communication and engagement with key roles in the schools—such as the family navigators, community school coordinators, and school site coordinators—may lead to decision making that is better informed by the needs of the school and community. Additionally, greater emphasis may be placed on the role of the IEAZ Management Consortium and ensuring that the appropriate collaborators are engaged with this leadership group consistently. Exploring flexible meeting formats perhaps should be explored for high-quality levels of engagement.

All partners, from program leadership to front-line staff, should be solicited for feedback on program implementation and decision making matters related to the overall program. It also should be communicated how program leadership uses and values the feedback partners provide.

Maintain integration of JBNC-supported roles in schools

Interview and survey responses made it clear that the JBNC-supported roles—specifically the family navigators, community school coordinators, and school site coordinators—were critical to FSCS program implementation. Continued and expanded support of these roles is needed to ensure that student and family engagement and the schools' capacity to offer necessary programming and services is sustained after the grant.

Support the hiring of bi- and multilingual staff

Interviewees noted that bilingual staff in these roles were a great asset within the FSCS program and allowed the schools to better serve students and families. A continuing commitment to hire and train bi- and multilingual staff for these roles will allow the program to better engage with diverse communities, particularly as additional immigrants settle in the IEAZ catchment area.

Connect programming and services to the community

School staff and community partner interviewees noted that the needs of students and families evolved throughout the grant period. These same respondents noted that they were not always able to meet those needs due to delays in understanding what students and families needed. Therefore, it is essential the FSCS program stays connected to the community's evolving needs by continuing to engage proactively with students and families through school and community events, surveys, and informal gatherings. These interactions provide valuable opportunities to gather feedback, build relationships, and ensure FSCS programming is grounded in community needs. By aligning programming with the identified community needs and continuously refining services based on data and feedback, trust with students and families can be established. This increased trust and awareness may lead to greater usage of services. Additionally, proactively engaging with students and families can uncover additional barriers to their participation in programming.

Strengthen and support partnerships

FSCS program leadership should continue strengthening and supporting partnerships between themselves, schools, and other relevant community organizations. To do so, all partners engaged in the FSCS program must be able to connect transparently to foster trust and ongoing collaboration between organizations.

Prioritize active meetings

While it may not be feasible for all partners to attend all meetings consistently, it can still be helpful to establish a regular meeting schedule for FSCS partners. These meetings must also engage the partners in attendance and address specific topics. Some interviewees suggested that partner meetings where best practices or success stories are shared between collaborators could facilitate peer-to-peer learning. Additional time during partner meetings may be used to identify the needs of individual collaborators and what service providers may be best suited to address those needs. There is also potential for new partners to be brought into the program based on these conversations. Finally, it may be beneficial to tailor communication strategies based on a partner's service area and ensure each receives relevant information that fits its needs.

Share data with partners

The FSCS program has a large network of school and community partners, all of which collect data on their activities, students, and their families to some degree. Creating a robust inventory of what types of partner data are available will allow program leadership to enhance its understanding of potential gaps or successes across FSCS programming. Additionally, partners may find benefits from sharing data among themselves, such as expanded access to resources and new connections.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As JBNC engagement with these and the full service community schools model continues, the groundwork laid during the five years of the program place is in good stead to be able to further understand its impact on the Near Eastside of Indianapolis. Yet, a variety of factors need to be considered to improve future analyses and evaluation of JBNC engagement with area schools and community partners.

Limitations

The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on communities nationwide, including IPS schools and JBNC service delivery. Because the grant was awarded during the second half of 2019, the pandemic hampered initial implementation efforts. JBNC intended to embed its staff in participating schools for the FSCS program so that it could interact directly with students and

their families. Because of pandemic-related restrictions, neither JBNC staff nor student caregivers could enter IPS schools until the 2022–23 school year. Thus, full implementation did not occur until year four of the five-year grant. Additionally, a shift to virtual participant interactions challenged JBNC's work with its families during the pandemic by making it difficult to contact and serve them. Because of these problems, the full impact intended by the FSCS program could not be realized, which affected its outcomes.

Rebuilding Stronger, an IPS initiative designed to promote equity and enhance learning in IPS schools, impacted the FSCS program, particularly in its last year. Washington Irving, which reopened and was incorporated by the FSCS program during the 2023–24 school year, was a part of Rebuilding Stronger. Because few of its students appeared in the IPS data during the 2022–23 school year, this school was excluded from the student outcome analysis. Additionally, Harshman Middle School began a transition to becoming a high-ability and dual-language school during that same school year, which resulted in a change in some of its population.

Because of a change in the primary outcome measurement tool JBNC used to determine the impact of its programs, the program outcomes could not be measured across the whole grant period. CRISP could not tie the Family Development Matrix outcome data—used during the first three years of the program—to the ASSM outcome data—implemented during the final two years of the program. Because the introduction of ASSM overlapped with JBNC staff's ability to enter the schools following the pandemic, CRISP researchers used ASSM as the outcome measure. However, this limited the number of cases that could be included in the family outcome statistical analyses and the length of time assessed to a two-year period, which impacted the analysis results.

Finally, CRISP experienced difficulty in obtaining required Indiana University Institutional Review Board approval, which may have affected the number of survey and interview responses obtained for the study. Despite this, analysis that supports the reported results could be accomplished with data obtained from JBNC and IPS, and the reported results on program efficacy do not appear to be compromised.

Future research

Because the student outcome statistical models explained very little variation in changes in student outcomes, other unmeasured factors largely affected these outcomes. It is possible that other student and family-focused programs at both the FSCS and comparison-group schools had a greater impact on student outcomes. Future research identifying these and accounting for them in statistical analyses may improve the explanatory power of the models and shed light on factors that all partners may influence to improve student outcomes.

As more JBNC program and outcome data is collected over time, researchers may have enough observations to create more complex statistical models to determine directly if JBNC programs affected family outcomes. Additionally, building on the groundwork the FSCS program laid, increased data sharing among partners would permit the inclusion of community partner data in statistical models to understand the relationship of these programs and services on family outcomes.

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719 Indiana Avenue, Suite 302
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Phone: (317) 278-1305
Email: iucrisp@iu.edu

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