

Prepared by
Abt Associates
for
The Boston Foundation

DEGREES OF COACHING

Success Boston's Transition Coaching Model



About Success Boston

Success Boston is Boston's citywide college completion initiative. Together, the Boston Foundation, the Boston Public Schools (BPS), the City of Boston, 37 area institutions of higher education, led by UMass Boston, and local nonprofit partners are working to double the college completion rate for students from the BPS. Success Boston was launched in 2008 in response to a longitudinal study by Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies and the Boston Private Industry Council, which showed that only 35% of those who had enrolled in college ever completed an Associate's or Bachelor's degree by the time they turned 25. Even as enrollment rates had steadily increased, completion rates had not. Together, the partner organizations implemented a four-part strategy: getting ready, getting in, getting through, and getting connected—to ensure Boston's young people are prepared to meet the challenges of higher education and achieve a degree that will allow them to thrive in the workplace.

In 2014, the Boston Foundation received a grant of \$2.7M from the Corporation for National and Community Service to expand this effort. The Social Innovation Fund award gives the Foundation the resources necessary to expand Success Boston's transition coaching model, Boston Coaching for Completion, from 300 to 1,000 students annually. In 2015, Corporation for National and Community Service awarded the Boston Foundation a second Social Innovation Fund grant totaling \$3.3M to support implementation of Success Boston's innovative coaching model for an additional two years. This \$6M total investment will allow Success Boston to support more than 1,000 students each from the Boston Public Schools classes of 2015, 2016 and 2017.

About Abt Associates

Founded in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1965, Abt provides applied research and consulting services to government agencies, nonprofit, and commercial organizations around the world. Abt's mission is to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of people worldwide. It applies its exceptional subject matter expertise, outstanding technical capabilities in applied research, and strategic planning to help local, national and international clients make better decisions and deliver better services.



Implementation of Success Boston Coaching 2014-15

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Postsecondary credentials increasingly matter for access to middle-class jobs, with six out of ten such jobs nationally requiring them (Carnevale, Jayasundera and Hanson, 2012). In fact, by 2020, an estimated 72 percent of Massachusetts jobs will demand postsecondary education or training (Carnevale, Smith and Strohl, 2013), a proportion that outstrips the likely supply of college graduates. In Boston, for example, the six-year college graduation rate for the Boston Public Schools' graduating class of 2005 was 47 percent (Sum et al., 2013). While this represents a substantial improvement over the 39 percent seven-year graduation rate of the class of 2000, even more dramatic improvement will be necessary to meet the predicted demand for a college educated workforce.

The connection between college completion and future economic stability—at individual, family, and community levels—is at the heart of the Boston Foundation's Success Boston Coaching program. Launched in 2009, Success Boston Coaching (SBC) is a transition coaching program designed to increase college completion for students who enroll in local colleges and universities. During the first two years of college, SBC serves Boston-area college students who are at highest risk of leaving college before completion through one-on-one, cohort-based coaching.

SBC operates across a network of seven Boston-based nonprofit organizations, in partnership with multiple local colleges and universities. The Boston Foundation funds grants to these nonprofit organizations, which in turn offer such integrated transition services as summer college preparation, ongoing financial aid advising, help with course selection, time management skills, career guidance, and personal and emotional support to new college students.

Precisely these kinds of “transition supports” can increase college persistence (Arnold et al. 2009; Bettinger et al., 2012; Carrell and Sacerdote, 2013; Castleman, Arnold and Wartman, 2012; Castleman, Page and Schooley, 2014; Stephan and Rosenbaum, 2013). Evidence from Boston specifically indicates the potential for SBC to boost the college graduation rate trends for Boston Public Schools graduates; the Center for Labor Market Studies (CMLS) at Northeastern University evaluated the effect of SBC on college persistence at seven participating colleges, and found that the one-year persistence rate for SBC students was 20.4 percentage points higher than that of non-SBC college students (Sum, et al., 2013).

The Boston Foundation commissioned Abt Associates to design and implement a comprehensive evaluation of the SBC program, reflecting its commitment to continued learning and ongoing program improvement. The longitudinal evaluation will examine both implementation and impact of SBC, and will produce several different reports over the next six years. This report represents the first of three that will be released over the course of the study, and it tackles one primary topic: *how Success Boston Coaching has been implemented*.

Over the 2014-15 academic year, the study conducted intensive interviews with staff from the nonprofit organizations, administered an online survey to students, and analyzed information from a database that stores records of coaches' interactions with students. This report is designed to help develop a common standard of practice, by describing the nonprofit coaching organizations' activities, students' experiences, and the commonalities and differences across the organizations. It also outlines the elements of transition coaching that appear to be consistent across the seven nonprofit organizations—as well as idiosyncratic to individual organizations—and describes

challenges faced by organizations, their staff, and by students. Based on what we learned, several themes have emerged.

- **SBC was implemented with consistent overarching goals, yet with distinct practices and service provision** across the nonprofit organizations. The nuts and bolts of coaching—how, when, where, and for whom nonprofit organizations provided coaching services—share some commonalities, yet also vary, and sometimes even differ across individual coaches within organizations. For example, across the organizations coaching services commonly focused on academic support, even as individual coaches tailored interactions to address student needs. The variation extends to the training coaches have received and would like to receive; the latter includes strategies for providing socioemotional support to students and greater clarity about Success Boston as a whole.
- **SBC is serving the intended target population:** participating students are racially and socioeconomically diverse—more so than the national college-going population. Most students (87 percent) were highly motivated to complete at least a bachelor’s degree, and one-third planned to earn graduate degrees. The majority of students (two-thirds) also reported that they earn some money from work while attending college, with most working at least 10 hours per week. Further, **students reported positive experiences with coaching;** 80 percent described the coaching received during their first year of college as helpful.
- **Students are often recruited into Success Boston coaching while in high school, and some are offered summer programming designed to facilitate college enrollment.** Summer services provided by the nonprofit organizations focused on helping students complete and submit college application materials and financial aid applications.
- **Coaches’ integration into the colleges’ respective service networks varied substantially across the multiple colleges and universities attended by Success Boston students.** Few colleges included coaches in institution-provided training and/or staff meetings, one college ensured that coaches could access its internal data system, and a handful provided office space for nonprofit coaches to use for meeting students. Generally, coaches obtained student data directly from or with the students as they accessed their college data systems.

Beyond simply characterizing the implementation of Success Boston coaching as variable across nonprofit organizations, coaches, colleges, and students, however, the study has also examined implementation more systematically. Specifically, we developed a structured index that integrates information from multiple data sources into a single multi-faceted measure. The index highlights both those specific coaching practices implemented across the program and those practices implemented more idiosyncratically. It offers an organization-specific lens that complements the program-wide findings described above, each of which can help inform the Boston Foundation—and the participating organizations—about important sources of variation. Arraying information within the implementation index suggests the following:

- **Coaches contacted students frequently through various modes** including in-person, text, email, and phone communications.
- **Across the program, organizations have set up structures and processes** to facilitate SBC implementation, including hiring and training qualified coaches, setting standards for support activities, establishing coaching activities on college campuses, and participating in the Success Boston network.

- **Organizations differed in which specific topics were generally addressed** during coach-student interactions; further, some organizations appeared to have adapted the context of coaching activities as function of students' first- or second-year status, while other organizations had more consistent practices regardless of students' progress in college.

Taken together, the first-year implementation findings, and these themes suggest some potential opportunities for growth at the coach, organization, and program levels. In particular:

- **There may be areas where greater consistency across organizations would be useful.** These include: expansion of summer programming to ensure that all students are offered (and therefore all nonprofit organizations provide) the supports that help students matriculate into college; establishing a threshold or range for frequency of coach-student interactions; ensuring consistency of program-wide data entry about summer programming experiences (and that there is adequate flexibility of the Salesforce data system for recording summer activities); providing regular program-wide meetings and events to enhance collaboration and shared best practices across the program and to help coaches connect with the program as a whole. Additionally, collaboration with higher education partners may help ensure that all coaches, program-wide, have access to campus-based space for meeting with students.
- **Information from coaches and students point to specific topic areas that may be useful.** These include: understanding the transfer process, given students' plans to earn at least a bachelor's degree, among both two- and four-year-students—which translates into increasing access to information for students and access to resources for coaches; and greater access to training, knowledge and resources for coaches about supporting students' socio-emotional and mental health needs.
- **Expansion to serve more students who attend a broader set of colleges and universities may influence organizations' and coaches' strategies for managing caseloads.** Potential strategies could include: developing systematic approaches to tailoring supports to students depending upon their academic progress, while continuing to provide individualization on a case-by-case basis; ensuring that coaches have access to—and use—multiple modes of communication to reach a larger number of students efficiently; and maintaining continuity in relationships between individual coaches and their students, if feasible—or developing strategies for navigating unplanned changes in personnel if not.

The findings reported in the remainder of this report describe implementation of coaching in detail, beginning with characteristics of SBC students. The report next describes the supportive structures evident at nonprofit organizations, the partner colleges, and the Boston Foundation that in combination lay the foundation for Success Boston coaching. The report also documents the what, when, how, and where coaching occurs, and summarizes coach and student perceptions about coaching, including identification of potential areas for improvement. As such, this report creates a comprehensive picture of SBC during the 2014-2015 school year. Because the report focuses on implementation, it does not attempt to link the implications of the coaching activities for student outcomes. Rather, the next report will explore the links between aspects of implementation and short-term or intermediate student outcomes, such as persistence, GPA, and FAFSA completion, once the study has obtained and analyzed outcome data. In the meantime, the findings and recommendations presented here may facilitate ongoing improvement in transition coaching in Boston, and contribute toward a consistently offered and integrated set of transition supports designed to increase college completion in Boston.

1. Introduction

Success Boston is a city-wide collaboration focused on improving college completion rates for Boston’s public school graduates through program, policy, and practice-based activities. Partners include the Boston Foundation, City of Boston, Boston Public Schools (BPS), the University of Massachusetts, other local colleges and universities, and local nonprofit organizations. Success Boston targets low-income, first-generation students of color by focusing on helping students “get ready, get in and get through college.” The long term goal of Success Boston is for 70 percent of BPS graduates who enroll in postsecondary education to earn a credential within six years of high school graduation. To reach this goal, the initiative provides academic programming and college advising activities at the high school level; supports students as they transition into college through one-on-one coaching into the first two years of college; and works closely with Boston area higher educational institutions to track their data on BPS graduates and to help them earn a degree and be prepared to enter the workforce.

The Boston Foundation is the convening backbone organization of the initiative. In particular, the Boston Foundation provides funding and other resources to nonprofit organizations engaged in the one-on-one transition coaching activities, hereafter known as the Success Boston Coaching (SBC) program. These organizations include: American Student Assistance (ASA), Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), Bottom Line, Freedom House, Hyde Square Task Force, Sociedad Latina, and West End House.

In 2014-2015, the Boston Foundation funded seven nonprofit organizations to engage over 700 students enrolled at over 30 Boston area colleges.

Coaches from these organizations work with students on life skills, study skills, help-seeking skills, and academic skills; they help students develop meaningful relationships, clarify goals, access networks, understand college culture, make college life feasible, and provide job and career mentoring.

Since the start of SBC in 2009, six cohorts of BPS graduates have had the opportunity to participate in SBC. An earlier evaluation demonstrated that coaching substantially increased student persistence in college (Sum, et al., 2013). Given this evidence, the steadily increasing number of students supported through SBC, and the Boston Foundation’s continued investment in the postsecondary success of BPS students, the Boston Foundation contracted with Abt Associates in 2014 to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the program.

Following BPS classes of 2013 and 2014, the current study extends Sum and colleagues’ work to additional cohorts of students, and expands the outcomes examined to include other key outcomes, including annual postsecondary enrollment and persistence rates, annual academic achievement, and ultimately, postsecondary certification and degree completion. Further, the evaluation includes an implementation component that examines consistency and variation in coaching among the participating organizations and allows for exploration of the relationships between implementation activities and student outcomes. In particular, the evaluation is designed to answer three main research questions about implementation and impact:

1. What is the effect of SBC—above and beyond the services students already receive—on early outcomes such as annual persistence and academic achievement, and, ultimately, on

postsecondary completion? Does coaching affect other outcomes? For example, what effect does SBC have on the types of colleges students subsequently transfer to?

2. How do the seven nonprofit organizations implement SBC (i.e. what is the amount, caseload, method of delivery, type of coach, coach tenure, recruitment/assignment procedures, etc.)? How do the coaching models vary across nonprofit organizations?
3. How do student outcomes vary in SBC, and are certain features of the coaching or characteristics of participating students associated with particular outcomes? For example, are differences in the implementation of the coaching associated with differences in impacts? How do the effects of SBC differ by high school quality and student characteristics such as high school academic performance, first-generation college status, gender, race/ethnicity, single parent status, family structure?

This report is the first of three reports produced as part of the *Success Boston Coaching Evaluation*, and it focuses on how the nonprofit partner organizations implemented coaching. The report integrates information from multiple data sources to summarize variation in nonprofit organizations' implementation, focusing on the two most recent SBC cohorts (2013 and 2014 high school graduates). The second report, which will focus on interim outcomes, will examine outcomes after SBC students have been out of high school for three and two years, respectively, and it will be released in March 2017 and present. The final report will be released in December 2020, and will combine the implementation results reported in this report with the impact results to explore long-term outcomes and variation in impacts.

In the chapters that follow, we first present the relevant literature related to transition coaching. Next, we review the evaluation design, and describe the study's data sources and approach to conducting analyses. Chapter 4 summarizes the results of the student survey. Chapters 5 and 6 describe coaching structures and activities; they draw from interviews, student survey results, and Salesforce data. The implementation index and analyses are described in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 presents the discussion and recommendations.

2. Improving College Enrollment and Completion

Postsecondary credentials increasingly matter for access to middle class jobs, with six out of ten such jobs nationally requiring them (Carnevale, Jayasundera and Hanson, 2012). In fact, in 2020 it is predicted that 72 percent of the jobs in Massachusetts will demand postsecondary education or training (Carnevale, Smith and Strohl, 2013). Moreover, research has consistently demonstrated significant and positive returns to a bachelor's degree on income (Aud et al., 2012; Carnevale, Rose and Cheah, 2011) as well as on social and health-based outcomes (Baum, Ma and Payea, 2010; Meara, Richards & Cutler, 2008). Further, research has shown that college education can serve as a key gateway to the middle class for low-income students (e.g., Haskins, 2008; Ayala and Striplen, 2002).

Despite the benefits from postsecondary attainment, children from disadvantaged groups are less likely to attend, persist, and complete college than their peers (e.g., Haskins, 2008; Bailey and Dynarski, 2011). Low-income students, in particular, along with first-generation students, ethnic minorities and males, are underrepresented in postsecondary education (Harper, 2006; Harper and Griffen, 2011; Tym, McMillion, Barone and Webster, 2004; Arnold, Fleming, DeAnda, Castleman, and Wartman, 2009). For example, across the income distribution, only 29 percent of those from the lowest income quartile attend any type of college compared to 80 percent of those from the top income quartile (Bailey and Dynarski, 2011).¹ College completion rates among low-income students paint an even bleaker picture: only nine percent of youth from the lowest income quartile obtain a Bachelor's degree, compared to 54 percent of those from the top income quartile (ibid). A large percentage of SBC students attend community colleges where the completion rates are low; nationally and in Massachusetts just under 40 percent of students who entered a community college in 2008 earned a credential from a two- or four-year institution within six years (Shapiro, Dundar, Wakhungu, Yuan, Harrell, 2015a).

Low rates of college enrollment and completion, particularly among low-income students, have traditionally been attributed to multiple factors, including (1) insufficient financial resources; (2) inadequate academic preparation in high school; and (3) lack of information and support (Bowen, Chingos, and McPherson, 2009; Kane, 1999; Bozick and Deluca, 2011; Avery and Kane, 2004; Adelman, 2004). Research on the first two factors listed above suggests promising strategies for boosting college success rates by making college more affordable, through federal subsidized loans and federal and state need-based aid (Castleman and Long, 2012; Deming and Dynarski, 2009; Dynarski, 2003; Goldrick-Rab et al., 2012; Kane, 2003; Scott-Clayton, 2011), and through college preparatory programs, enhanced college academic supports, and summer enrichment and tutoring programs (Barnett et al., 2012; Kirabo, 2014; Scrivener and Coghlan, 2011).

SBC targets the third piece of the college enrollment and completion puzzle: informational and support gaps for students. This broad topic has been a recent focus of the college access practice and research communities. After high school, informational and support gaps occur among

¹ College entry and completion statistics reported by Bailey and Dynarski (2011) come from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (1997), and are based on cohorts born between 1979 and 1982, with college completion rates calculated for cohorts graduating between 1997 and 2000.

underrepresented student subgroups during the summer following students' senior year of high school, in which students who are enrolled in college fail to attend, leading to low rates of college enrollment (i.e., summer melt; Castleman and Page, 2013), as well as after students begin college, leading to low rates of college persistence (Bettinger and Baker, 2014). The research literature suggests that areas in which students – particularly low-income and first generation students – often require additional information and support include (a) assistance with filing (and refiling) the FAFSA; (b) help with addressing the financial gap between one's financial aid package and the cost of college; (c) navigating the many administrative tasks requiring on-time completion; (d) help with academic questions such as which courses to enroll in and what to do when one is falling behind on coursework/grades; and (e) general socio-emotional support as students attempt to acclimate to new structures and stresses (Roderick et al., 2008; Arnold, Fleming, DeAnda, Castleman, and Wartman, 2009; Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Bettinger et al., 2012; Castleman, Arnold, and Wartman, 2012; Castleman and Page, 2013; Castleman, Page, Schooley, 2014; Bettinger and Baker, 2014; Bird and Castleman, 2014; and Castleman and Page, 2014). Coaching focused these areas and targeted to students from disadvantaged groups who are enrolled in college, which SBC provides, may improve college outcomes through several mechanisms. Coaches can:

- help students navigate financial aid forms, widely acknowledged as complex and time-consuming to fill out, and remind students of key due dates (Castleman, Page and Schooley, 2014; Carrell and Sacerdote, 2013; Stephan and Rosenbaum, 2013; Arnold et al., 2009);
- provide socio-emotional benefits by offering underrepresented students general support and encouragement as they transition to and persist in college (Castleman, Arnold and Wartman, 2012; Roderick, Nagaoka, Coca, and Moeller, 2008); and
- support students to navigate through their freshman and sophomore years of college, coaches can provide students with help in making informed course and internship choices based on students' skills, interests and career goals as well as guidance for students struggling to stay on task in their courses (Bettinger and Baker, 2014).

Findings from research aimed at improving outcomes for community college students in particular identify mechanisms by which supports may improve student outcomes. Connecting students to resources (CCCSE, 2012), clarifying goals and the path to achievement (CCCSE, 2012; Karp, 2011), timely and continuous enrollment (Crosta, 2013; CCCSE, 2012; Karp, 2011) and developing positive social relationships (Karp, 2011) are mechanisms that could improve student persistence and degree completion.

Several recent randomized controlled trials – viewed as the gold standard in education research – suggest that coaching interventions can significantly increase college enrollment and persistence.

- One pilot study examined how systematic outreach and assistance from transition coaches over the summer after high school affected decisions of college-intending high school seniors from Providence, Rhode Island who were enrolled in Big Picture urban high schools. The study found that students who received summer transition support were significantly more likely to follow through with their postsecondary plans than control students who did not receive such supports (Castleman, Arnold and Wartman, 2012). Specifically, the four-year college enrollment rate of treatment students was 14 percentage points higher than the rate for control students. Further, treatment students were over 1.5 times more likely than control

students to keep their college plans. However, as Castleman and colleagues cautioned, the unique features of Big Picture schools, including the amount of attention each student receives from coaches may mean that these findings do not generalize to other coaching interventions in urban high schools.

- In a similar study, Castleman, Page and Schooley (2014) investigated how a program of systematic outreach and assistance from transition coaches over the summer after high school affected the college decisions of students from Boston Public Schools (BPS) and Fulton County Schools (FCS). Findings reaffirmed that such summer transition coaching increases college enrollment and persistence among program students relative to students who did not receive coaching, although enrollment rates were not as pronounced as those from the pilot study. Among students in BPS and FCS, coaching increased the probability of college enrollment by 3 percentage points, leading to a 20 percent reduction in summer melt. Coaching impacts were most pronounced among low-income students.
- Bettinger and Baker (2014) conducted a study examining the effect of another coaching program, Inside Track, that provides one-on-one coaching targeted to students currently attending college. The study found that freshman students who received targeted coaching were 15 percent more likely to have persisted in college 18 to 24 months later, compared to those who did not receive the coaching.

Findings from the former two studies (Castleman, Arnold and Wartman, 2012 and Castleman, Page and Schooley, 2014) suggest that the impact of coaching can vary across sites and student subgroups. Castleman, Page and Schooley (2014) attribute variation in impact to several factors related to the intervention itself, including differences in the (a) rates of student communication with advisors; (b) the amount of attention each student received from his/her counselor; and (c) prior experience coaches had with supporting students' college enrollment tasks. Findings from these studies suggest that coaching may be more effective for certain types of students than others—and may benefit low-income students in particular.

In addition to experimental evidence suggesting a positive impact of coaching, particularly for low-income students, coaching also appears to be a cost-effective strategy for improving college outcomes. For example, increasing grant aid to targeted populations can cost as much as 2.5 times that of coaching per college student (Castleman, Arnold and Wartman, 2012). Given the potential benefits and cost-effectiveness of coaching as well as findings that suggest the impacts of coaching programs may vary across contexts and by student groups, understanding further how coaching is implemented in practice is an important avenue of research. This report aims to understand how SBC is implemented through different organizations, identifying variation in implementation that may later help to explain program impacts.

3. Evaluation Design

We address the question of how SBC is implemented across nonprofit organization by collecting and examining data from multiple sources to describe the various components of coaching, including the students who are participating, the nonprofit organizations and their approach to transition coaching, and the support activities coaches provide to students. Findings from these different stakeholders are also integrated into an index that helps summarize implementation across the program during the 2014-2015 academic year. In this chapter, we describe in detail the data sources and our analytic approaches for the quantitative and qualitative data.

3.1 Data Sources

The study collected data from six sources, including: interviews with leadership at the nonprofit organizations, coach interviews, organizational documents, BPS administrative records, the SBC Salesforce database, and a student survey. Each is described below.

3.1.1 Nonprofit Organization Interviews

Executive directors or lead program administrators at all seven nonprofit organizations were interviewed using a standardized semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix A).² The topics included their respective organization's approach to transition coaching, the organization's hiring processes for coaches, the goals of their transition coaching model, and specific services provided. Other topics included the targeted student population for participation in SBC, the partnerships with SBC, as well as other college access and high school programming available at the organization. The team conducted interviews with directors of all seven nonprofits between August and October 2014; interviews were transcribed, and interview notes were used to help identify key elements of SBC implementation.

3.1.2 Coach Interviews

Coaches at each of the seven nonprofit organizations were invited to participate in a one-hour interview using a standardized semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix B). The topics included: how coaches they recruit students, their ongoing engagement with students, coaching activities, relationship(s) with specific IHEs involved in SBC, and their accomplishments and challenges as an SBC coach. The interviews were conducted between January and March 2015, and information from those interviews helped to identify key program implementation elements. We audiotaped the interviews (with coaches' permission), which were transcribed. Exhibit 3.1 summarizes the number of completed interviews across the seven nonprofit organizations.

² To understand the contributions of uAspire, a Success Boston partner, to SBC the study team had a conversation with a uAspire staff member in fall 2015.

Exhibit 3.1 Number of Coach Interviews by Nonprofit Organization

Nonprofit Organization	Number of SBC Coach Interviews
American Student Assistance (ASA)	2
Boston Private Industry Council (PIC)	3
Bottom Line*	7
Freedom House	2
Hyde Square Task Force	2
Sociedad Latina	1
West End House	2
Total	19

Source: Interviews with Nonprofit Organizations

*Bottom Line employs 12 coaches who work with students in their freshman and sophomore years of college; seven of those serve SBC students as well as other Bottom Line students.

3.1.3 Nonprofit Organization Documents

We collected such documents as mission statements, job descriptions, and application materials from each nonprofit organization; these were supplemented with information from the nonprofits' websites, when applicable. These documents augmented interview data in the description of the program model and the nonprofits' expectation for coaches.

3.1.4 Salesforce Data

Salesforce is a cloud-based Client Relationship Management (CRM) database widely used in the nonprofit sector to track participant-level data. The SBC Salesforce database houses information on student demographics, educational background, college academic progress and achievement, and details about each student-coach interaction for all students served by each coaching organization. Data from the SBC Salesforce database identify the students who received SBC support during the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years, and also record student exposure (in terms of amount of time) to SBC.

Coaches are responsible for entering student information and the details of students' interactions on an ongoing basis. TBF has set six data deadlines throughout the year to ensure data are captured in real-time. Within the transitions support section, coaches enter data related to the following fields:

- date of the interaction,
- duration (in minutes),
- the type of support provided (including Academic, Personal and Emotional, Financial, Career and Future Plans, and College Administration),
- direct support or a referral,
- method of communication,
- location,
- group or individual support,

- coach name, and
- an open note space.

Because Salesforce is a cloud-based database where records can be edited and information updated at any time simultaneously, the data were downloaded at two specific time points, once in February 2015 and another in July 2015. Students belonging to the entering classes of 2013 and 2014 were identified based on Salesforce records on February 6, 2015, and final data for the implementation analysis were pulled on June 29, 2015. When data are pulled from Salesforce, report templates are used that include the variables of interest and the following restrictions: students must be in either Cohort 5 or 6, and student records must have been created before the first data pull (2/6/2015).

3.1.5 Boston Public School (BPS) Student Data

Extant data provided by Boston Public Schools on high school graduates from school years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 were used to provide demographic information (age, race, gender, limited English Proficiency (LEP) status, free/reduced price lunch eligibility) on SBC students. These data provide additional context about the backgrounds of SBC participants and inform subgroup analyses of survey sample.

3.1.6 Student Survey

The online survey was designed to learn how participating students perceived the activities and services provided by Success Boston coaches during the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years. The survey asked participating SBC students about the specific activities their coaches offered, and how they interacted with their respective coach (or coaches) and with other campus support services. Specifically, the survey included questions about:

- the frequency, mode, and content of communications between students and coaches;
- perceptions about the helpfulness of coaching;
- topics where additional support would be useful; and
- students' relationships with their coaches.

The survey also included a series of student background questions, many of which were drawn from existing national surveys, which allows us to benchmark SBC students against a national sample of their peers. These questions focused on important student background information not available in Salesforce or BPS' administrative datasets, such as current employment status and whether or not students have their own children. Additionally, the survey asked about students' academic experiences and preparation, and educational aspirations.

There were 808 students identified as 2013-2014 or 2014-2015 SBC program entrants in the Salesforce database as of February 2015.³ These 808 students were invited to complete an online

³ The evaluation sample includes all students identified in Salesforce as Cohort 5 (2013-2014) or Cohort 6 (2014-2015) as of February 6, 2015. A student was considered to be a program entrant if there was an intake form submitted into Salesforce for the student, whether or not transition support records were associated with that student.

survey in spring 2015. A survey invitation was sent to students via email in early March 2015. Once launched, we sent students weekly reminders throughout the ten-week period to encourage survey completion. To increase response rates, students who submitted a survey received a \$10 gift card and were entered into a raffle to win one of three \$100 prizes. We also provided reminder email templates coaches could use to encourage their students to complete the survey.

The final survey response rate was 58 percent; 468 of the 808 students responded to the survey (see Exhibit 3).⁴

Exhibit 3.2 SBC Student Survey Response Rates

	# of Students (N = 808)	% of Total Surveyed
Total respondents	468	58%

N = 808 students

* Four students declined to participate in the survey

Exhibit 3.3, below, shows the distribution of student survey responses rates by subgroups, as compared to the total population of surveyed students. The response rates by subgroup indicate that the survey respondent sample is very similar to the full survey sample.

Exhibit 3.3 Survey Respondents by Cohort and College Type

	Survey Respondents		SBC Students, 2013-14 and 2014-15
	N	Percent (N = 468)	Percent (N = 808) ⁵
Cohort:			
College entering class of 2013-14 (2013 cohort)	183	39%	45%
College entering class of 2014-15 (2014 cohort)	285	61%	55%
College Type:			
Enrolled in two-year institution	158	34%	36%
Enrolled in four-year institution	298	64%	63%
Not enrolled at time of survey administration*	7	1%	<1%

* Twelve students did not fall into either the "Enrolled in two-year institution" or "Enrolled in four-year institution" categories; seven of these 12 reported that they were not enrolled in college, three were participating in a year-long educational/professional development program, and two did not indicate postsecondary school status.

⁴ Of all students surveyed, 12 percent (95 students) had no coaching interaction records recorded in the 2014-2015 school year, and these students were more likely to be non-responders (69 students) than responders (26 students).

⁵ 31 students whose institution could not be determined either from Salesforce or the 2015 student survey are excluded from this table.

3.2 Analysis Approach

Qualitative content analytic techniques and quantitative descriptive statistics were used to investigate the questions of implementation. All interview data were summarized and reviewed before being uploaded into NVivo 9, a qualitative data analysis software package. To analyze the data across interviews, we held regular analytic meetings to review the data, to discuss emerging themes, and to agree upon coding strategies. The team developed coding categories in NVivo at a broad macro level, and once broader thematic categories had been finalized, developed subcategories to create indicators that summarize implementation activities and levels across organizations. These data are also applied in an implementation index of SB coaching (see discussion in Chapter 8 below) for the implementation index as well as implementation findings across nonprofit coaching organizations.

Survey data were cleaned and analyzed to generate descriptive statistics (i.e., counts, ranges, frequencies, means, and standard deviations) using Stata, a statistical analysis software package. All survey respondents' responses were included in data analysis, regardless of completeness of their survey data.⁶

⁶ The number of responses considered “missing” varies across reported student survey data, as not all respondents were eligible to answer every question. For example, only students who had indicated that they work and/or care for family members were then asked whether those life responsibilities interfered with their ability to complete their assignments. Accordingly, the missing data (for this question) arise when students who had reported that they worked or cared for family members who did not respond to the question about how these responsibilities affected their school work. Students who reported they did not experience these life responsibilities were excluded from the second question.

4. SBC Students

In this chapter, we present detailed descriptions of the SBC students and how they compare to a sample of their peers, both locally (i.e., other BPS graduates) and nationally. The student survey serves as the primary data source. In addition to asking students about their experiences with coaches, the survey collected information about their demographic characteristics, educational expectations and experiences, and efforts to balance school with work and family. Where appropriate, survey data were supplemented with BPS data that had been collected when students were in high school. The first section below focuses on student demographic characteristics, where SBC students attend college, academic backgrounds, and educational aspirations. The second section describes students' efforts to balance work, family, and other life responsibilities while attending college.

Key Findings

Several key findings emerged from our analyses of student demographic characteristics and survey responses:

- The majority of SBC students are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as measured by free and reduced price lunch eligibility, more so than other BPS students and students from across the state of Massachusetts (MA); identify as non-white; and are first-generation college-goers.
- The majority (68%) of SBC students were working for pay either full- or part-time while in school. SBC students attending two-year colleges were, on average, working more hours each week than SBC students attending four-year colleges.
- Very few (5%) SBC students reported that they are parents, and even fewer (2%) reported currently that they care for a child.
- Most SBC students did not live on campus and attended colleges where the majority of students are commuters.
- SBC students were highly motivated to achieve postsecondary degrees; 46 percent reported that they plan to earn a bachelor's degree and 33 percent that they plan to earn a graduate degree. These high expectations may have been bolstered, in part, by the fact that many SBC students reported feeling well prepared by their high school coursework for college and having high confidence in their abilities to succeed academically.

4.1 Who Does SBC Serve?

SBC served students typically underrepresented in college, students from disadvantaged backgrounds and first-generation college-goers. Exhibit 4.1 presents key demographic characteristics of the 2013 and 2014 SBC student cohorts, as well as all their counterparts from BPS and the state.

The majority of SBC students in the sample were between 19 and 20 years old (75 percent), which is closely aligned to expectations given that only BPS graduates from 2013 and 2014 are included in this evaluation. More SBC students were female (60 percent) than male (40 percent). The SBC students were a racially and ethnically diverse population; 42 percent of students identified as Black, 36 percent as Hispanic, 15 percent as Asian, and 6 percent as White (Non-Hispanic). In fact, SBC served a proportionally greater percent of non-white students compared to all BPS and Massachusetts

(MA) graduates from the classes of 2013 and 2014 as a whole (94percent SBC identify as non-white vs. 87 percent BPS and 29 percent MA graduates).

SBC also served a large number of economically disadvantaged students; 90 percent of participants qualified for free and reduced price lunch (FRPL)⁷, which is higher than BPS students generally, and considerably more than the statewide average of 39 percent. Additionally, 61 percent of SBC students self-identified as the first generation in their family to attend college.⁸

Exhibit 4.1 Characteristics of Students: SBC, BPS, and MA

	Classes of 2013 and 2014		
	SBC (N=808)	BPS (N=6702)	MA (N=131,900)
<i>Gender</i>			
Female	60%	54%	50%
Male	40%	46%	50%
<i>Age as of July 2015</i>			Not Available
Less than 18	< 1%	< 1%	
18	8%	5%	
19	40%	34%	
20	35%	40%	
21 & older	17%	22%	
<i>Race/ethnicity</i>			
African American/Black	42%	43%	9%
Hispanic	36%	30%	12%
Asian/Pacific Islander	15%	12%	6%
White/Caucasian	6%	13%	71%
Native American	1%	<1%	<1%
Other/Mixed	1%	2%	2%
<i>Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) Eligibility</i>			
Not eligible FRPL	10%	19%	61%
Eligible FRPL	90%	81%	39%

Sources: BPS student data; MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) student data; SBC Salesforce database.

4.2 Where do SBC Students Attend College?

The SBC students attend a variety of colleges in Boston and the greater Boston area; in total, 43 colleges had at least one SBC student in the 2014-2015 school year. However, 94 percent of SBC students were concentrated at the nine colleges listed in Exhibit 4.2. Among students at the primary

⁷ While FRPL data are generally viewed as a reliable poverty indicator at the elementary school level, the data are considered less reliable for high school. Because FRPL is an opt-in program at the majority of schools, high school students may refuse to enroll in FRPL due to a perceived stigma attached to the program. As such, the reported proportions of FRPL recipients is likely an undercount compared to the number of students eligible to receive FRPL based on family income status.

⁸ First generation status is only available in the SBC Salesforce database, not from either BPS or MA DESE. Therefore, no comparable data on first generation status of BPS students or MA students are reported.

colleges, about two-thirds of SBC students were attending four-year colleges, where most of the student body is made up of full-time students, and the other one-third were attending two-year colleges, where most of the student body is made up of part-time students. The majority (73 percent) of SBC students attend moderately large colleges (with 10,000 - 19,999 students).⁹

Exhibit 4.2 Characteristics of Colleges Serving SBC Students in 2014-15

Institution Name	# of SBC Students Enrolled	% of SBC Students Served	College Type	Percent Full-Time Students ¹⁰	Full-time Student Retention Rate ¹¹	% of Students Living Off-campus ¹²
University of Massachusetts-Boston	265	33%	Four-year	61%	77%	100%
Bunker Hill Community College	249	31%	Two-Year	33%	59%	100%
Bridgewater State University	73	9%	Four-year	75%	81%	37%
Suffolk University	63	8%	Four-year	79%	75%	38%
Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology	26	3%	Four-year	85%	N/A	76%
Salem State University	23	3%	Four-year	67%	78%	24%
Massachusetts Bay Community College	16	2%	Two-Year	36%	58%	100%
Northeastern University	14	2%	Four-year	90%	96%	1%
Roxbury Community College	13	2%	Two-Year	33%	48%	100%
Other	46	6%				
Not enrolled 2014-15	17	2%				

Source: U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) 2013.¹³ 3 students were excluded from this exhibit because institution information was missing.

⁹ The institution size categories for these IHEs are as follows: 20,000 students and above (Northeastern University), 10,000-19,999 students (University of Massachusetts Boston, Bunker Hill Community College, Bridgewater State University); 5,000 - 9,999 students (Suffolk University, Salem State University, Massachusetts Bay Community College); 1,000 - 4,999 students (Roxbury Community College); and under 1,000 students (Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology).

¹⁰ Percent of college’s total student population.

¹¹ A measure of the rate at which full-time students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year colleges, this is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking full-time undergraduates from the prior fall enrolled in the current fall. For all other colleges this is the percentage of full-time first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall.

¹² Living off campus with or without family.

¹³ IPEDS is a system of interrelated surveys conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). IPEDS gathers information from every college, university, and technical and vocational institution that participates in the federal student financial aid programs.

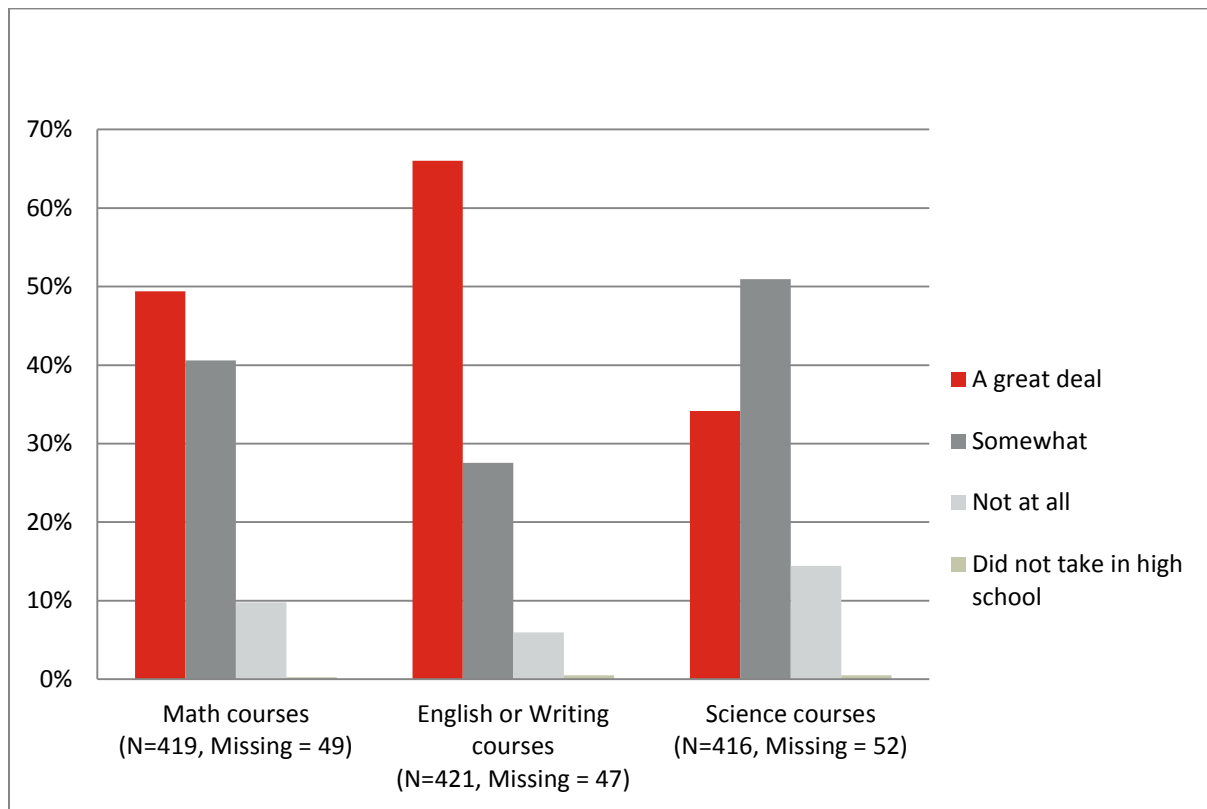
The majority (71 percent) of SBC students attended predominately commuter schools.¹⁴ Consequently, the large majority of SBC students lived off-campus; 78 percent of students at four-year colleges and 99 percent of students at two-year colleges reported living either with their parent(s)/ guardian(s) or in another off-campus location. This characteristic is noteworthy, as in general commuter students are more likely to be present at the college only when attending classes, which may limit students’ efforts to engage with their college community outside the classroom.

4.3 SBC Students’ Academic Preparation, Experiences and Expectations

4.3.1 Academic Preparation

Many SBC students believed their core high school coursework prepared them “a great deal” for college. Exhibit 4.3 illustrates SBC students’ perceptions of how well their high school experiences helped prepare them academically for college. Two-thirds (66 percent) of SBC survey respondents reported that their high school English or writing courses prepared them “a great deal” for college, while almost half (49 percent) reported the same about their high school Math courses.

Exhibit 4.3 SBC Student Perceptions of Preparedness for College

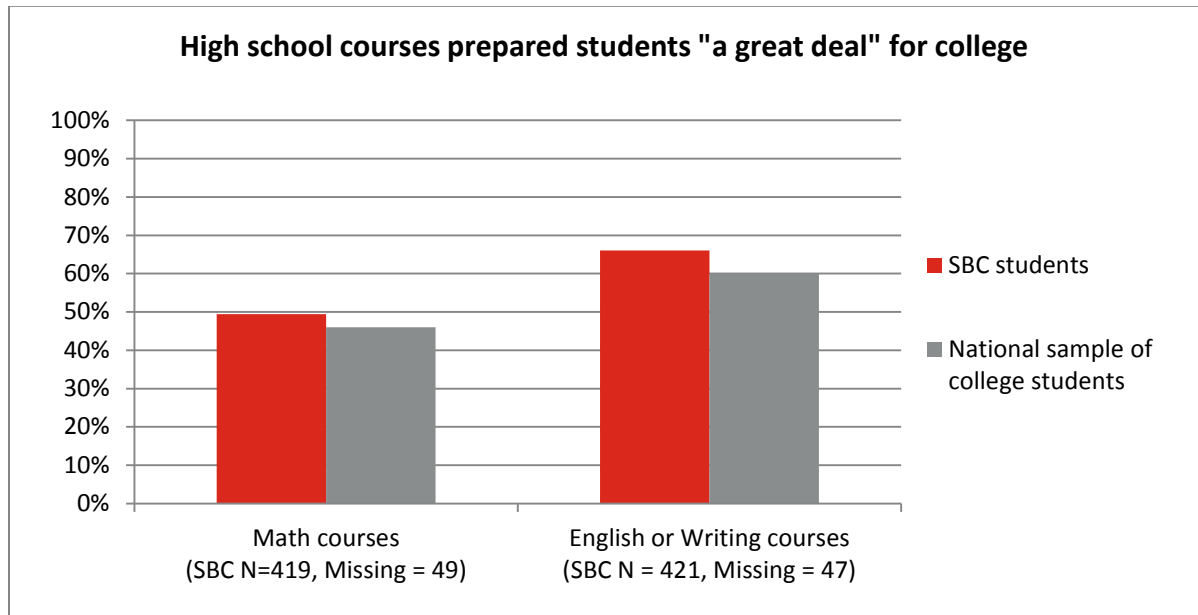


Source: SBC Student Survey, Q38: “To what extent did the following high school courses prepare you for college?”

¹⁴ Commuter school defined as majority of student population living off-campus, with or without family.

As shown in Exhibit 4.4, SBC students' reports of whether their high school courses prepared them for college align almost exactly with responses from a national sample of their peers¹⁵; nationally, 60 percent of students reported their English or writing courses prepared them "a great deal" for college, and 46 percent reported their mathematics courses also prepared them "a great deal."

Exhibit 4.4 SBC Students' Perceptions of Preparedness for College Compared to a National Sample



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q38: "To what extent did the following high school courses prepare you for college?"; 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey

4.3.2 College Academic Experiences

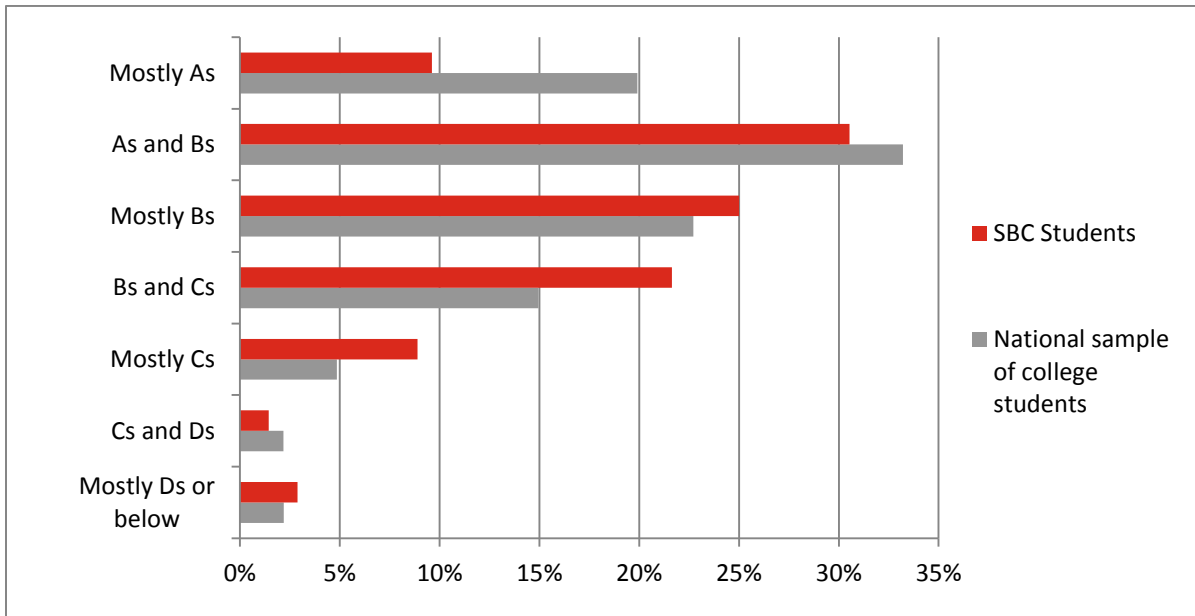
Exhibit 4.5 below shows the distribution of SBC students' self-reported college GPA, as compared to a national sample of their peers.¹⁶ Both SBC students and the national sample of their college-going peers generally reported GPAs of mostly Cs or above; the largest proportions of both groups reported GPAs of As and Bs (31 percent SBC, 33 percent nationally). However, across the GPA range, SBC students reported lower GPAs than the national sample; two-thirds (66 percent) of SBC students

¹⁵ The national sample of peers includes students who entered college in 2003-04 and were included in the Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study survey. The BPS Longitudinal Study of 2004/09 included a nationally representative sample of first-time, beginning students who were first enrolled in postsecondary education between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004.

¹⁶ Exhibit 4.5 displays students' self-reported GPA on the student survey, not an official transcript record. Students' high school GPA from BPS could not be included because GPA is calculated by each individual school, which makes comparisons across schools difficult. Comparison data for national sample of peers comes from the 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey.

reported GPAs of at least mostly Bs, somewhat less than the three-quarters (76 percent) of the national sample.¹⁷

Exhibit 4.5 Students' Self-reported GPAs, SBC Students vs. National Sample



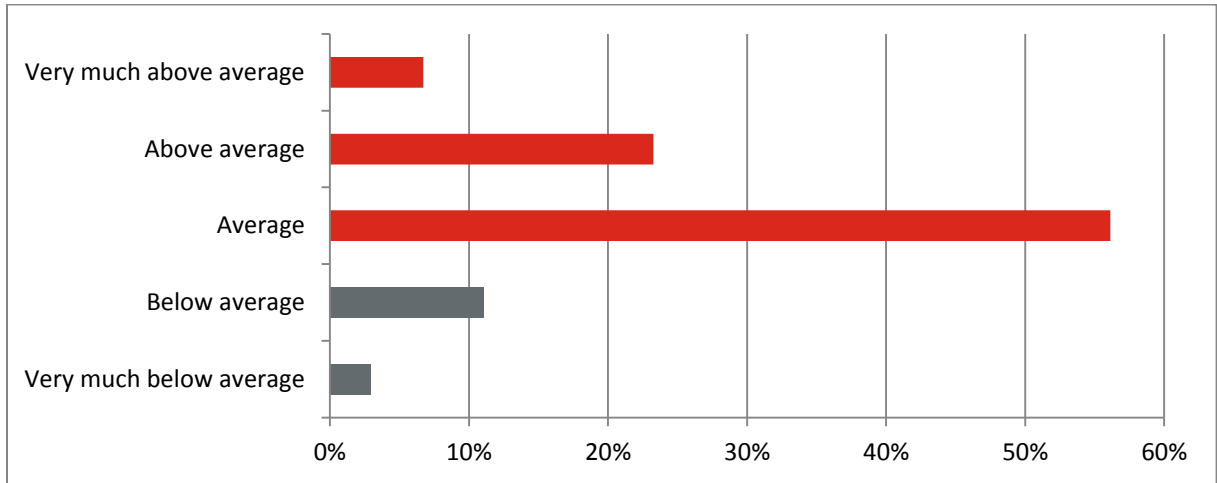
Source: SBC Student Survey, Q36: “Which of the following best describes your grade point average at your current college/university through the end of your most recent term?”, N = 416; Missing = 52; 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey

Although SBC students have lower self-reported GPAs compared to the national sample, SBC students reported positive perceptions of their own academic abilities. The survey asked students to recall the most difficult course they took during the previous semester of college, and then assess their academic abilities relative to other students in that specific class. As illustrated in Exhibit 4.6, the majority (56 percent) of students reported having average academic ability when compared to their peers, and about one-third (30 percent) reported being above average.

SBC students feel academically equivalent or more qualified than other students enrolled in the same college courses, and are confident that they can be academically successful.

¹⁷ Self-reported GPA by gender was examined; no substantively meaningful differences appeared. On the whole, however, female SBC students reported slightly higher GPAs than their male counterparts.

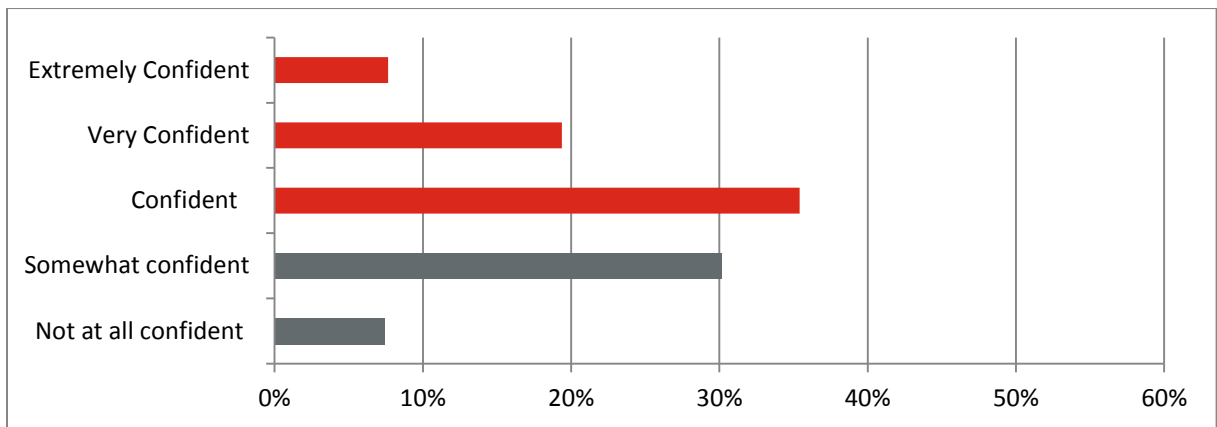
Exhibit 4.6 SBC Students' Assessments of Their Academic Abilities Relative to Other Students



Source: SBC Student survey, Q39: “Think of the hardest class you took last semester. Compared with other students in that class would you say your abilities were...?”, N = 417, Missing = 51

Additionally, as illustrated in Exhibit 4.7 below, when asked about a time they were working on a challenging task in their most difficult class, nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of SBC students reported being confident, very confident, or extremely confident that they would succeed. Very few SBC students (8 percent) reported feeling not at all confident in their ability to succeed academically.

Exhibit 4.7 SBC Students' Confidence in Their Abilities to Succeed Academically



Source: SBC Student survey, Q40: “When you were working at a challenging task in that class, how confident were you that you would succeed?”, N = 418, Missing = 50

SBC students’ perceptions of and confidence in their academic abilities, aligned with their reported experiences; nearly one-third (28 percent) of SBC reported having been on honor roll or dean’s list and only 13 percent reported having been placed on academic probation. Compared the national sample of college-going students, SBC students also have lower reported rates of having to repeat a course for a higher grade and having received a grade of incomplete (See Exhibit 4.8).

Exhibit 4.8 Student College Academic Experiences, SBC and a National Sample

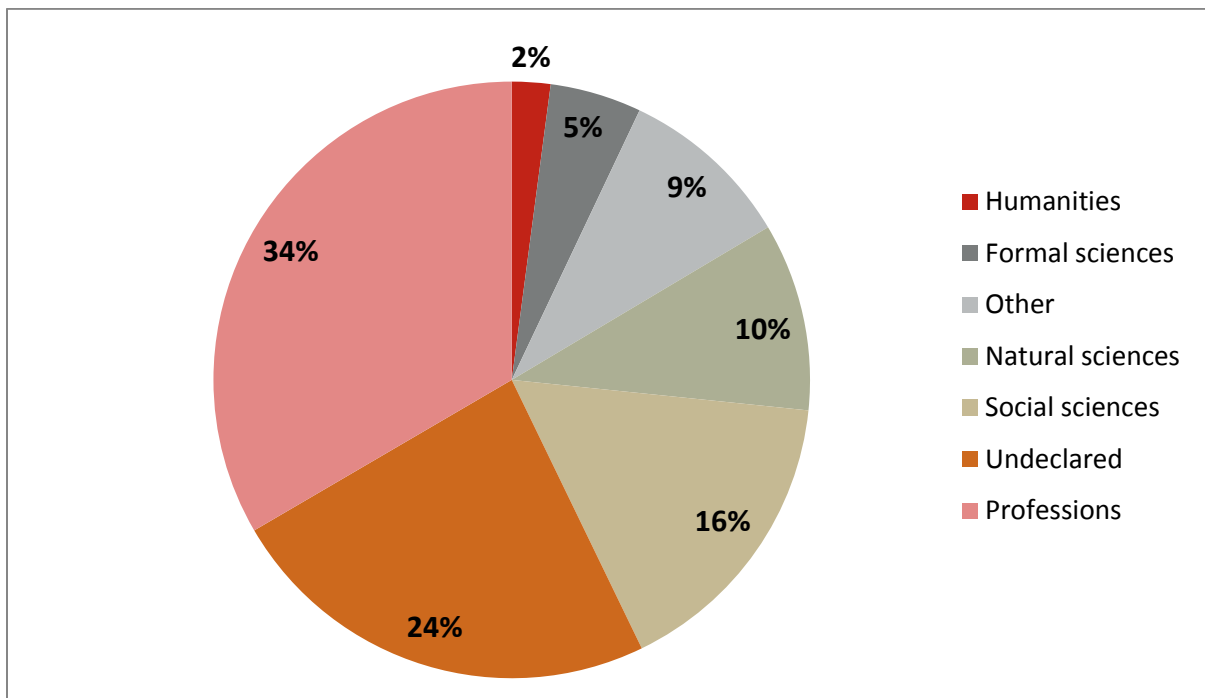
	SBC Students	National Sample of College-going Students
Have received a grade of incomplete	11%	16%
Have repeated a course for a higher grade	15%	23%
Withdrew from a course after the normal drop/add deadline	31%	31%
Have been on honor roll or dean’s list	28%	Not available
Have been placed on academic probation	13%	Not available

Source: SBC Student Survey, Q37: “While enrolled in college have you ever...”, N = 420, Missing = 48; N = 419, Missing = 49; N = 419, Missing = 49; N= 416, Missing = 52; N = 418, Missing = 50; National Sample: 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey

4.3.3 Educational Plans

SBC served students with a varied range of academic interests and educational aspirations. Exhibit 4.9 demonstrates that the majority (75 percent) of SBC students had declared a major when they first enrolled in college, and that those declared majors are distributed across a multiple disciplines. The most popular majors are Biology (9 percent), Criminal Justice (7 percent), Psychology (7 percent), Business (6 percent), and Nursing (6 percent). One-third of SBC students declared a professional-oriented major, such as Accounting, Business, Education, Criminal Justice, Nursing, or Engineering. A small percentage of SBC students reported declaring majors in the Humanities (e.g., History, English) or Formal Sciences (e.g., Mathematics, Computer Science), and 10 percent reported declaring a major in the Natural Sciences (e.g., Biology, Chemistry).

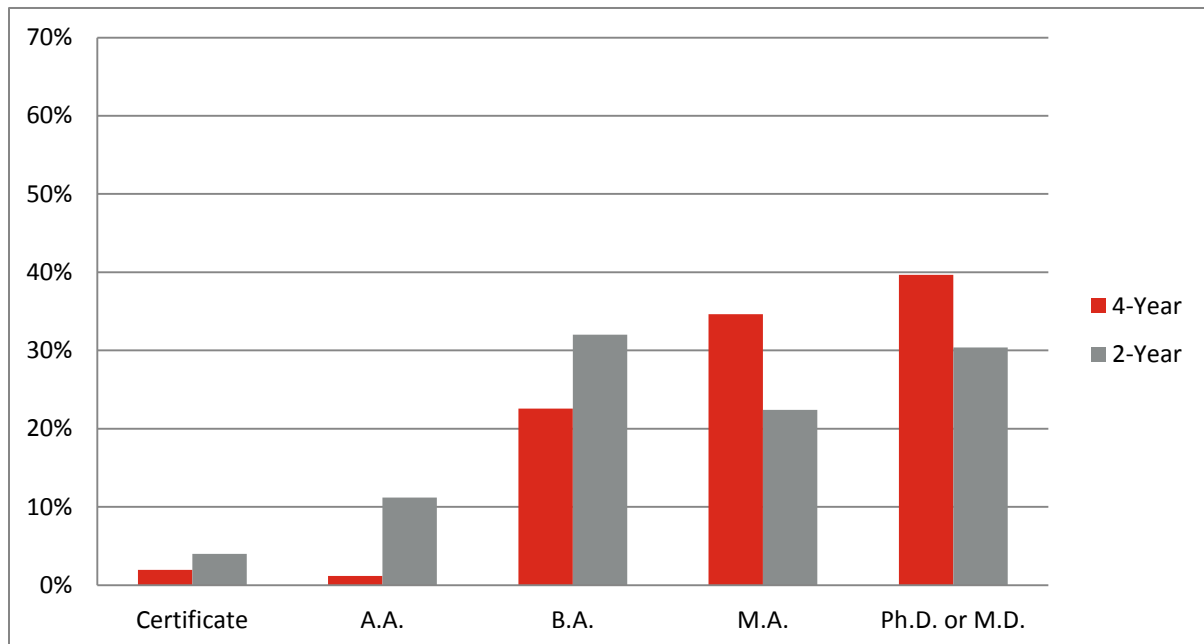
Exhibit 4.9 Declared Major at Initial College Enrollment



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q25: “What was your declared major at the time you first enrolled in college?”, N=383, Missing=85

SBC students reported having high aspirations about their educational aspirations and types of degrees they expect to complete. The survey asked students two different, yet related questions about educational aspirations. The first asked students what kind of degree(s) they would like to attain if there were no obstacles in their way. The majority (63 percent) of SBC students currently enrolled, whether in four- or two-year colleges, reported that they would want to obtain a graduate degree. The proportion is even higher for four-year college students. Exhibit 4.10 shows that 75 percent of the SBC students enrolled at four-year colleges aspired to earn a graduate degree.

Exhibit 4.10 SBC Students Degree Aspirations, Four-Year vs. Two-Year College Students

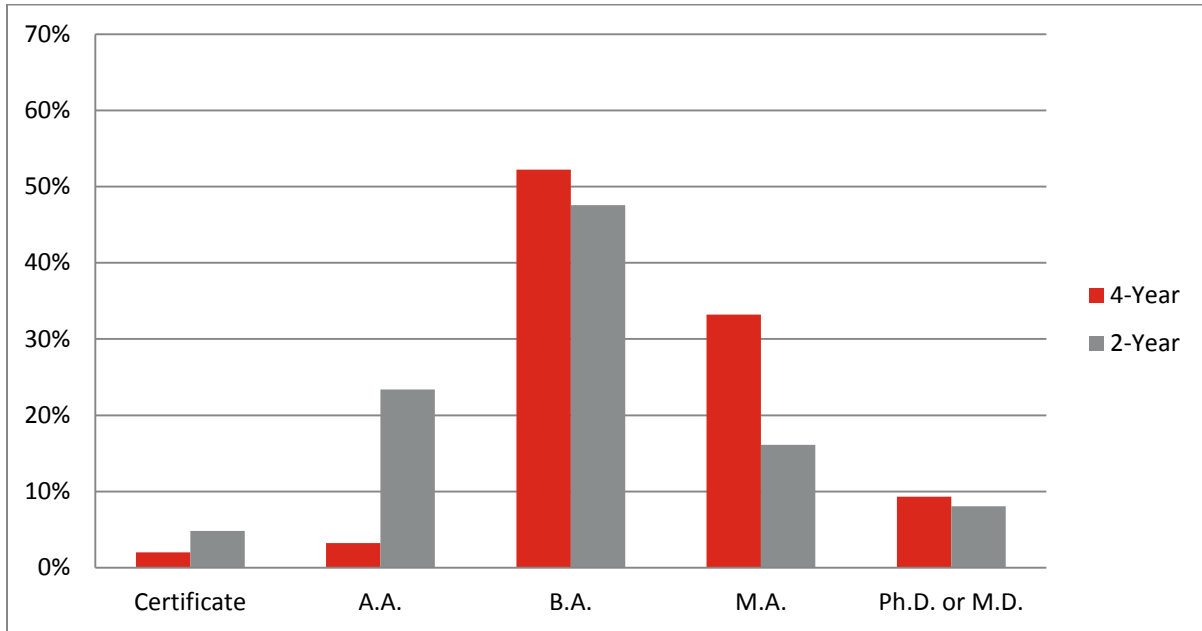


Source: SBC Student Survey, Q42: "If there were no barriers, how far in school would you want to go?", N = 383, Missing=45

Note: Exhibit excludes 28 students who reported "I don't know" and 12 for whom college type data were missing.

The second question asked students about the type of degree they believe they would *actually earn*; fewer students (37 percent) expected they would actually earn a graduate degree. Expectations may be lower than aspirations because students currently enrolled in college are most confident that they will finish their current degree or transfer if currently enrolled in a two-year college, and are less confident about whether they will be able to continue beyond their bachelor's. As Exhibit 4.11 illustrates, students at both two- and four-year colleges were most likely to say they expect to complete a bachelor's degree (51 percent of all SBC students) as their highest degree. In fact, 48 percent of two-year college students expect to transfer to a four-year institution and complete a bachelor's degree.

Exhibit 4.11 SBC Students Expectations for Degree Attainment, by College Type (Two- and Four-Year)



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q43: “As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will actually get?”, N = 372, Missing = 48

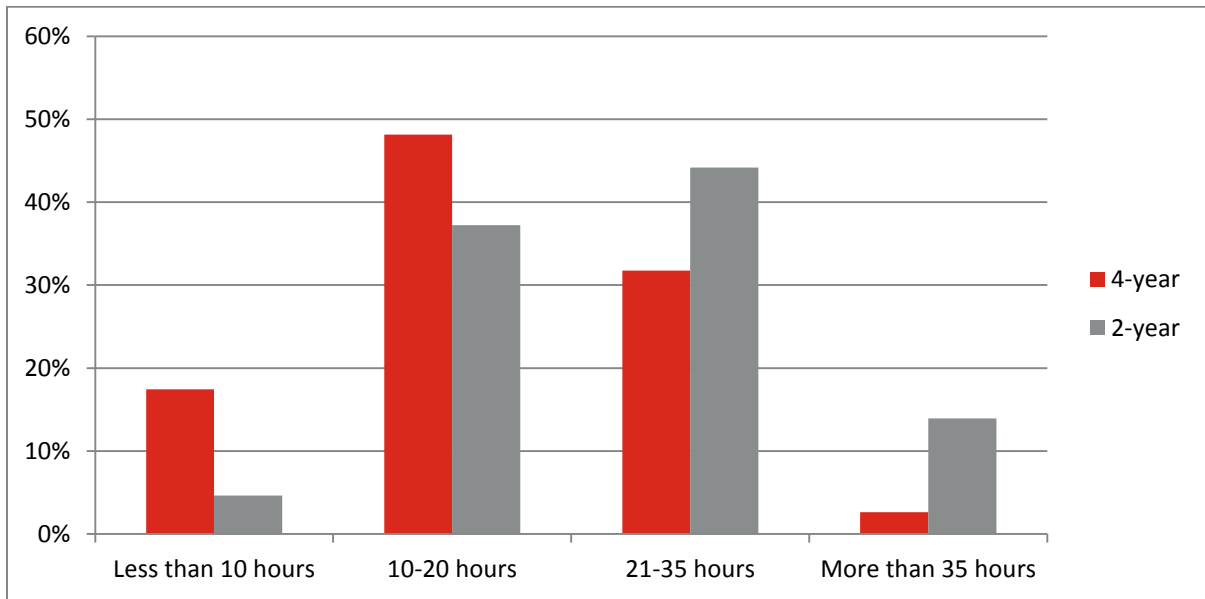
Note: Exhibit excludes 36 students who reported “I don’t know” and 12 for whom college type data were missing.

4.4 Balancing Work, School and Family

In addition to attending college, the majority of SBC students had additional non-academic responsibilities, such as a part- or full-time job (68 percent), which they must balance with their coursework. The majority (88 percent) of SBC students were enrolled as full-time students. Almost all (98 percent) of students attending four-year colleges were enrolled full-time, compared to slightly more than half (60 percent) of students attending two-year colleges.¹⁸ The majority of SBC students also reported having additional responsibilities outside the classroom, including a paid job. About two-thirds (68 percent) of SBC students reported working either part- or full-time for pay while enrolled in school. As shown in Exhibit 4.12, among working students, the majority (73 percent) reported working between 10 and 30 hours per week, and 18 percent reported working more than one job. Seventy-two percent of students enrolled in a four-year college reported working while in school, compared to 64 percent of students enrolled in two-year colleges. The average number of hours worked per week, however, was generally higher among students enrolled in two-year colleges (26 hours/week) than those enrolled in four-year colleges (18 hours/week); 58 percent of working students from two-year colleges indicated that they work over 20 hours per week, considerably higher than the 35 percent of students from four-year colleges who reported that level of employment.

¹⁸ Full-time defined as enrolled for 12 or more credits per semester or per quarter or 24 or more hours a week. Part-time defined as enrolled for 12 or fewer credits per semester or per quarter or 24 or fewer hours a week.

Exhibit 4.12 Average Hours Worked per Week while Enrolled in College

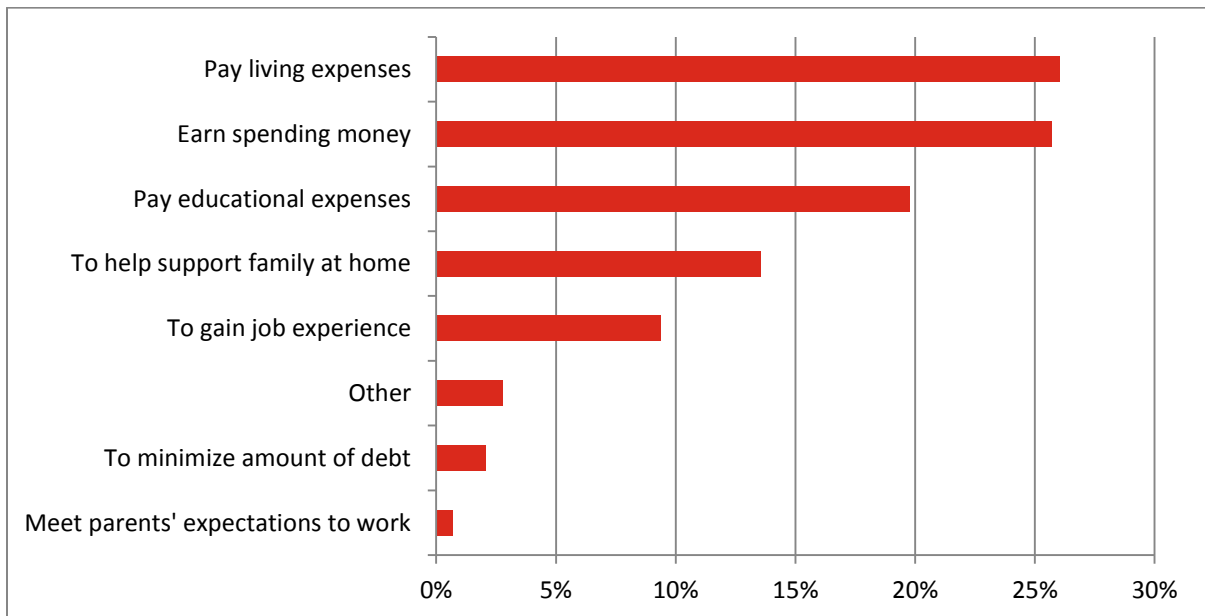


Source: SBC Student Survey, Q27: "On average, how many hours do you work each week while you are enrolled in school?", N = 276; Missing = 10

Note: Exhibit excludes 178 students who reported not working or reported insufficient work information and 4 students for whom college type data were missing.

When asked why they work while enrolled in school, the most common student responses included: paying living expenses, earning spending money, and paying educational expenses.

Exhibit 4.13 Primary Reason for Working while in College



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q29: "What is your main reason for working while you are enrolled in school?" N = 288; Missing = 2

Note: Exhibit excludes 178 students who reported not working or reported insufficient work information.

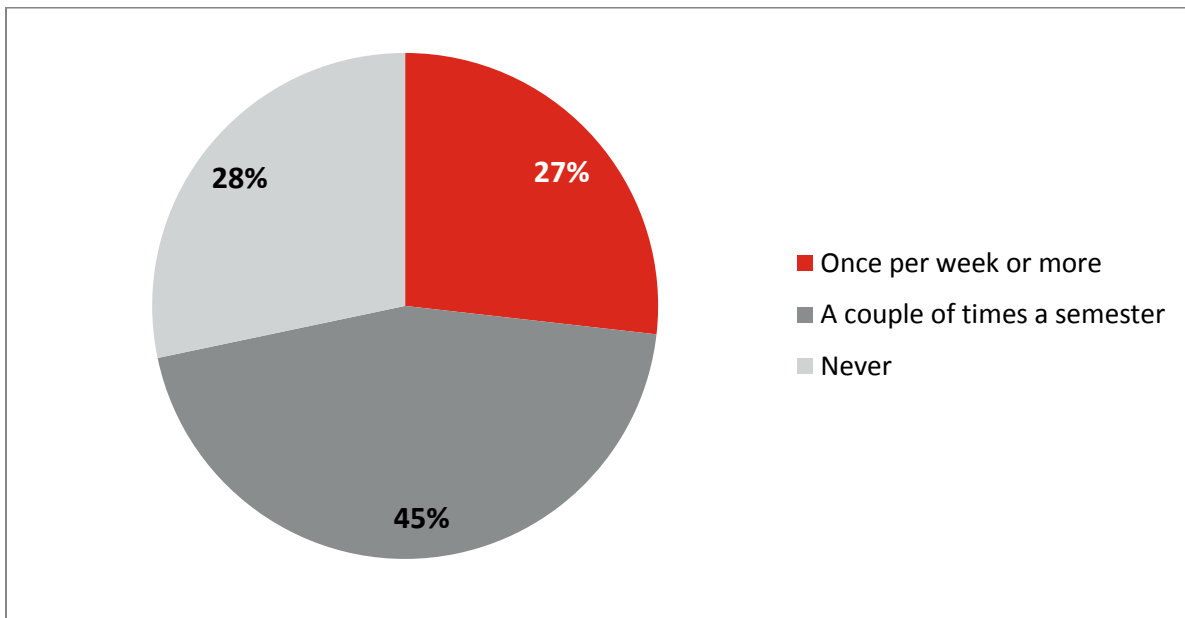
A small proportion of SBC students reported having additional responsibilities outside of school and work, including taking care of a sick family member or caring for a child. When compared to a nationally representative sample of college students from the 2003-04 school year, SBC students had lower reported rates of having children (5 percent versus 19 percent nationally).¹⁹

Five percent of SBC students reported having children; two percent reported that they are currently responsible for their child.

One-fifth (18 percent) of SBC students reported that they currently contribute to the financial support of one or more people (such as children, parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, or other relatives), which may help explain why many SBC students work while in school.

Given these personal responsibilities, and the fact that the majority of SBC students work, it is clear that balancing school, life and work responsibilities is an important consideration. In fact, nearly half (45 percent) reported that these responsibilities interfered with schooling a couple times per semester, and about one quarter (28 percent) of students reported that these responsibilities never interfered with school, as shown in Exhibit 4.14.

Exhibit 4.14 Frequency of Life Responsibilities Interfering with College



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q30: “Do your life responsibilities (work, caring for family member/child) interfere with your ability to attend your college classes or finish assignments?”, N =265, Missing=2

Note: Exhibit excludes 38 students who reported “I don’t know” and 163 students who reported not experiencing significant life responsibilities or reported insufficient information.

¹⁹ Source: Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study

4.5 Learning Points

The demographic characteristics of SBC students highlight the commitments made by the Success Boston initiative and the nonprofit organizations to serve a population that has historically been less likely to attend, persist, and complete college than their peers. SBC serves a more racially and socioeconomically diverse student population as compared both to BPS graduates as a whole and public school graduates across Massachusetts. The percent of non-white students—particularly black and Hispanic students—served by SBC is proportionally higher than national rates of college-going students, where only 36 percent of students enrolled in college identify as black and 38 percent identify as Hispanic (ED IPEDS, 2012-2013).²⁰ Moreover, SBC students are also more likely to be economically disadvantaged than the average college student nationwide; 90 percent of SBC students were FRPL eligible, compared to 38 percent of undergraduate students nationally who received Pell grants (a measure of economic disadvantage) in 2013-14 (College Board, 2014). SBC students' demographic characteristics indicate that the program has met its goals to engage a diverse and traditionally underserved population from BPS.

On the whole, SBC students across both four- and two-year colleges reported high aspirations for degree attainment. Eighty percent of students enrolled at two-year colleges expect to complete at least a bachelor's degree, which indicates that many SBC students at two-year colleges expect either to transfer from their current institution to a four-year college or eventually enroll in a four-year institution after completing their associate's degree. This expectation is particularly noteworthy, as national transfer rates among two-year college students show that only about one-quarter of students who started at a two-year community college transferred to a four-year institution within six years (Shapiro, Dundar, Wakhungu, Yuan, Harrell, 2015b). The high level of interest in obtaining a bachelor's degree among SBC two-year college students suggests that the transfer process may be an area in which the program overall, and coaches in particular, could provide additional support and resources to students.

Many SBC students must navigate balancing school and work with other life responsibilities. The majority (68 percent) of SBC students reported working for pay either full- or part-time while in school, with most working students reporting working more than 10 hours per week on average. Substantially more two-year college students work at least 20 hours per week as compared four-year college students. However, three-quarters of students reported that their life responsibilities interfered with school at least a couple times per semester, yet only about one-quarter of SBC students identified managing life responsibilities as one of the topics for which they found support from their coach most helpful. Given the large number of SBC students trying to balance coursework and non-academic responsibilities (i.e., work), this may be an area where coaches could direct more supports for students. In fact, 18 percent of students identified managing life responsibilities (family, home, work) on the survey as a topic area on which they would like more support from their coach.

²⁰ Students enrolled in college defined as 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in degree-granting institutions.

5. Supportive Structures

This chapter describes the environments within which transition coaching occurs, setting the stage for a closer look at the coaching activities (see Chapter 6). Drawing from interviews with the seven nonprofit organization directors, nonprofit program documents, and interviews with all 19 coaches from the 2014-2015 school year, this chapter describes the structures in place to support transition coaching. The supportive structures encompass both nonprofit organizations' features designed to facilitate coaching as well as colleges' specific contexts in which coaches are working.

In the first section, we describe the nonprofit coaching organizations, and their approaches to training, articulating their coaching model, caseloads and relationship with the SBC network. The second section of this chapter, Relationships with Colleges, describes coaches' perspectives on how they provide support to students within the contexts of the partner colleges; this section also draws upon student survey data to provide students' perspectives on sharing data and meeting with coaches on college campuses.

Key Findings

The seven nonprofit organizations structured their transition coaching in different ways.

- Nonprofit organizations were similar in their hiring practices and all provide at least some training to coaches.
- Nonprofit organizations differed in their approaches to identifying target populations and in determining how many students to assign to coaches' caseloads.

How coaches integrate their services on college campus varied across the campuses:

- Coaches (and therefore nonprofit organizations) had differential access to training, professional development and orientation from colleges.
- On some campuses, coaches had access to private space for meeting with students, whereas on other campuses, coaches met students in public areas. Overall, students reported that they were satisfied with meeting locations.
- Students reported sharing their academic information with coaches either by giving coaches access to their student accounts or logging on to the account with coaches present.

5.1 Nonprofit Coaching Organizations

Seven nonprofit organizations were funded to participate in SBC during the 2014-2015 school year. (See Appendix D for brief descriptions of each organization.) The seven nonprofit coaching organizations shared strong similarities, yet also varied meaningfully in their approaches to transition coaching and the structures established to support it.

5.1.1 Who are the Coaches?

A review of applications for coaching positions, program brochures and materials, as well as organization websites provided information about the qualifications these nonprofit organizations were looking for in coaches.

- All nonprofit organizations required coaches to have:
 - previous experience with youth,
 - some college coursework, preferably at least a Bachelor’s degree, and
 - an ability to maintain student data.
- Six organizations prioritized the importance of bilingualism or multilingualism and/or being able to communicate effectively with the target population.
- Six required coaches to work flexible hours.
- Five organizations explicitly highlighted the importance of building relationships with the partner colleges, and five discussed coaches’ roles in recruitment activities.

Not surprisingly, the interviewed coaches had all clearly met the desired education and experience qualifications. Thirteen of the coaches held a Bachelor’s degree and six held a Master’s degree. All coaches interviewed had prior experiences working with high school or college students before assuming their current roles as transition coaches. Almost all coaches (18 of 19) were employed full-time by the nonprofit organizations and over half (12 of 19) of the coaches had been employed by the organization less than three years. Coaches at four of the nonprofit organizations provided coaching to students that were not part of SBC.

5.1.2 Training for Coaches

Directors at each nonprofit organization described their respective organization’s training for the transition coaches. *All nonprofit organizations provided some form of training to coaches.* Trainings ranged from day-long retreats to ongoing professional development series to six-week training sessions that included mock student meetings.

Modeling and shadowing. Three organizations included active practicing or modeling coaching behaviors in their training of new coaches. Organization E²¹ conducted mock coaching meetings during its six-week training sessions; Organizations A and G demonstrated or modeled coaching behaviors during training and professional development sessions; new coaches shadowed more experienced coaches to observe coach-student interactions.

One or more coaches from each nonprofit organization reported needing further training to support their students more effectively.

Content-Specific Seminars. Five of the nonprofit organizations offered training through content-specific professional development seminars focused on topics such as youth development and completion of FAFSA forms.

Directors at two of the nonprofits also noted the SBC network for its training for coaches. These directors reported that their coaches attended regular program-wide meetings to learn more about expectations for tracking and maintaining student data as well as to share information about students and coaching experiences with other SBC coaches. At four of the monthly Success Boston coaches

²¹ Pseudonyms are used for each nonprofit organization to protect the identity of individual respondents.

meetings uAspire, a national non-profit organization focused on increasing knowledge and resources to make college affordable, presented modules about helping students make college affordable. Coaches were also able to reach out directly to uAspire staff with any questions related financial aid forms and college affordability.

Coaches were also asked about the training they received and whether they felt they needed any additional support. Eight coaches expressed a need for additional training related to the personal and emotional supports they provide to students. They suggested, for example, such training topics as coping with homelessness and trauma; learning how to better handle discussions of sexuality and gender; and deepening their knowledge of counseling skills.

5.1.3 Program Model

The main data sources for understanding program models were interviews with directors and documents describing each organization's approach to coaching. The nonprofit organizations varied in the specificity with which they described their approach to coaching. For example, Organizations D and F had broad missions that included transforming the community through education, and focused coaching on teaching students to advocate for themselves and become productive citizens. On the other hand, Organization E was focused solely on preparing students to enroll in and successfully complete college. Their coaching model was structured with a specific rubric and set of benchmarks to which all coaches adhere. Further, an important component of the program models at Organizations B and G was hiring former program participants as coaches. Organization A's coaching model targeted community college students, helping them prepare to enter the workforce and Organization C emphasized financial literacy.

Commonalities across program models were identified as well. All seven organizations included helping students complete the FAFSA and connecting students to resources as key transition coaching activities.

Program models also described the target student population. All nonprofit organizations served BPS students as part of SBC; however, each nonprofit organization also prioritized particular student populations. Exhibit 5.1 presents the target population of each nonprofit organization. All seven organizations reported targeting students from specific areas or neighborhoods in the city, although they did not require students to be from a specific neighborhood in order to work with a coach. While all the organizations serve students from low income neighborhoods, four organizations (D, E, F, and G) reported they specifically target students from low income backgrounds in their recruitment efforts. Additionally, Organizations C, D, E and G reported that their organizations prioritized first generation college-going students during recruitment.

Exhibit 5.1 SBC Target Student Population, by Nonprofit Organization

Nonprofit Organization	Target Population			
	Minority	High School or Neighborhood	First Generation College	Low Income
Organization A		✓		
Organization B	✓	✓		
Organization C	✓	✓	✓	
Organization D	✓	✓	✓	✓
Organization E		✓	✓	✓
Organization F		✓		✓
Organization G	✓	✓	✓	✓

Sources: Nonprofit organization director interviews (N= 7), Coach interviews (N = 19), Nonprofit organization documents (N = 7 organizations)

5.1.4 Caseloads

Coach caseloads varied within and between nonprofit organizations as well as throughout the school year (Exhibit 5.2). As reported by coaches, the average number of students on a coach’s caseload was 63 students. Coaches included students across all SBC cohorts, as well as students who were not part of SBC, when they described their caseloads.

Exhibit 5.2 Average Student Caseloads, by Nonprofit Organization

Nonprofit Organization	Average Student Caseload
Organization A	60-80
Organization B	>25
Organization C	50-60
Organization D	60-80
Organization E	80+
Organization F	25-50
Organization G	50-60

Source: Coach Interviews, N = 19

Coaches reported that their organizations assigned caseloads in varying ways. One organization deliberately assigned students to coaches based on source of referral, so that students recruited from local schools comprised 30-40 percent of each coach’s caseload, while the remaining 60 – 70 percent came from college referrals. Another coach described how he was assigned students as “the luck of the draw.” A third explained that a caseload was designed based on the expectation of support needed given the school the student attends and “how the numbers shake out.” Seven coaches, whose caseloads ranged from 60 to 90, spoke specifically about challenges regarding larger than optimal caseloads, noting scheduling difficulties, problems adequately dividing their time among students, and not having enough time with students in one-on-one meetings. As one coach pointed out, with a caseload of over 75, “There’s only so much that can be done.” Future data collection with coaches will attempt to better understand what an optimal caseload might be and why.

Another challenge, reported by two coaches, was that they work with other students outside of SBC, further limiting their time. One of these coaches reported having about 20 SBC students in addition to

supporting a group of 65 students from another program. In addition, in what seemed to be a unique challenge, one organization's coaches had students at over twenty colleges and faced challenges working with each school's academic calendar. As a result, "trying to find the right time to have the right conversations with students is definitely a challenge."

5.1.5 Interactions with SBC

Coaches were also asked to reflect on their connections to and interactions with the SBC network. Coaches from three organizations identified with the SBC network in addition to—or sometimes instead of—the individual organizations for which they worked and coached. A coach from Organization A noted that he viewed his organization and Success Boston as a one entity rather than two separate organizations. Another coach elaborated, explaining that students "do not know or identify as Organization A" and that even she, as a coach, identifies herself as an SBC coach when speaking to students. A coach from Organization E corroborated this sentiment, saying, "I like the idea that we are not just Organization E but part of a

movement to support urban students graduating college." However, she also noted that Organization E, in her opinion, does not emphasize the greater Success Boston initiative enough, and she worries that new coaches may not have the same sense of the movement and the unity it provides. The 2014-2015 school year was the first time two of the organizations' coaches worked under the SBC umbrella, and their coaches reported working to help students identify with SBC as well as their individual nonprofit coaching organization. One coach explained that being new to the SBC network meant she was learning what it means to be an SBC coach while also helping her students recognize the SBC "brand."

Coaches described themselves as "scaffolding" students who are not ready to deal with situations on their own; some students required more intensive support and others were quickly able to take the lead themselves and solve their own dilemmas.

Several coaches revealed that they felt they needed more direction from the SBC program and from TBF. Two coaches felt that they were not told how exactly coaches should be reporting on students in Salesforce and they did not have any SBC-specific curriculum to direct their coaching. Another expressed a desire for a unified orientation for new coaches that would include talking to prior coaches and sharing best practices, explaining, "There was something like that for the database, but I wish there was more of a training around the actual coaching part." Another coach claimed his only contact with the SBC network came from receiving a Success Boston newsletter once a month but was open to deepening the relationship, saying, "Anytime you can hear how different people do things, you can learn something."

5.2 Relationships with Colleges

Most of the coaching occurred on college campuses, making the relationships between the colleges and the coaches an integral component of SBC. In the following sections, we present data from coach interviews to describe how coaches integrate their work on college campuses. Where appropriate, student survey data illustrate students' perspectives.

5.2.1 Connecting Students to Campus Resources

"The biggest challenge is accessing resources. It is new to them [students]. They don't know how to do that, 'how' is most common question I get. It is also a challenge to be independent.

They do not have 8am to 3pm schedules anymore. They have to balance classes with a work-study job. They're not sure how to live on their own." SBC Coach

Coaches from all organizations reported that connecting students to campus resources was one of the important supports they provided to students. In fact, 56 percent of students reported that their coach was “very helpful” at connecting them to other campus resources.

Thirteen of 19 coaches reported they encouraged students to learn what resources were available to them on campus and how to utilize those resources. Coaches reported they continuously worked to empower students to handle their own issues by teaching them how to access such support services as the career services office, the financial aid office, the writing center, and the math lab. As one coach said, we try to “draw a clear line that we are not teaching but instead teaching them how to be taught.” Another explained, that, “Sometimes students will say, ‘Can you edit my paper for me?’ And I respond, ‘Sorry, that’s not something I can do but I can tell you where the writing center is.’”

Coaches needed to be aware of available resources and supports to which to connect students. Coaches described learning about campus supports through formal trainings and workshops, informal interactions with campus staff or other coaches, or independently through online searches. Interviews with coaches probed respondents about how they worked to integrate their coaching activities on the college campuses. Responses from coaches indicated their ability to integrate their coaching activities differed across the college campuses. Coaches reported that two of the partner colleges provided opportunities for training or professional development. These trainings included workshops and monthly meetings with guest speaker presentations. SBC coaches were also included in staff meetings at the two colleges. Six coaches, working with students at colleges that did not provide training, learned of available resources and opportunities via word of mouth, other counselors, and online searches.

- Some coaches mentioned more involved advising practices, such as accompanying their students to a college office after a one-on-one meeting. One coach explained that she thinks, “Some students don’t really know what to ask and how to ask it and there are staff who are attentive to that, but there are staff that are not.” As a result, she accompanied them so that she was able to sit with them and “not rush them through it.”
- Coaches, in a few instances, reported connecting students to resources that extended beyond college campuses. Mental illness, homelessness, pregnancy, and undocumented status came up as illustrations of extreme challenges coaches encountered in their efforts to connect students to appropriate resources off-campus.

5.2.2 Access to Student Data

How coaches get access to students’ academic information—grades and course enrollment—varied by students and also by the colleges in which students were enrolled. Coaches at all seven organizations reported that at least some of their students provided them with their login information so that the coaches could directly access the students’ records. Six of the organizations also asked students to sign a FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) waiver so they could access information directly from the colleges; coaches reported that most students agreed to sign the waiver.

Students’ reports of whether and how they shared their academic information with their coaches corroborated coaches’ accounts of access. Students reported that the most common means of sharing

data were: providing coaches access to students' login information (48 percent) and logging into the college data portal with the coach to view academic information (30 percent).

5.2.3 Meeting Spaces

Locations of one-on-one meetings between coaches and students ranged from college campuses to organizational offices to local restaurants and cafes; however, both coaches and students reported that on-campus spaces were the most frequently used settings. Coaches described that where they met with students on campus, and whether they believed the meeting spaces were suitable for conducting coaching activities both varied depending on the college campus. Fifteen coaches reported that on at least one of their campuses, they did not have a designated or private space where they could meet with students. Instead, they met with students in the cafeteria, student café, library, or lobby. Meeting in public spaces with students presented advantages and challenges for some of the SBC coaches.

- Three coaches reported that sitting in the lobby at a college allowed them to have more interactions with students who did not schedule meetings. One coach explained that these interactions and brief conversations were a great way to check in with students, saying “Students will ask ‘Mr. are you going to be here?’ and they’ll come back...to the extent that when you’re not there they’ll be like I came by and you weren’t here.” In fact, one coach from Organization F had official office space on one campus that acted as her home base but nonetheless often stationed herself in the cafeteria to meet and greet students.
- In contrast, three other coaches observed that coaching in public spaces was not optimal, because discussing personal and confidential topics with students was far more challenging in public spaces. One coach, for instance, explained that it was harder for students to talk about debt when meeting with students in a crowded space.

Some coaches reported having access to designated (and private) areas for meetings at some college campuses. Two colleges offered informal office space to coaches. Organization G coaches developed a close working relationship with the admissions office at another college, and were able to use a table in that office for meeting with students.

Being visible in a public space reminded students of their coaches' presence, and also allowed coaches to see whether and when students were attending or arriving late for classes.

Coaches also held meetings with students off-campus. Four organizations' coaches reported meeting with students at their offices. One coach, who worked with students at multiple colleges, reported using different approaches for different colleges; she met with one college's students on campus two days per week and met with the other students at the coaching organization's office. Alternatively, three coaches met students for lunch or coffee at local restaurants.

Students' experiences corroborate coaches' report. The majority of students met with their coaches on college campuses (73 percent). Exhibit 5.3 shows that the overwhelming majority of students found the meeting places were convenient and were equipped with the necessary resources (e.g., internet access) (88 and 86 percent, respectively); somewhat more than half the students reported that the meeting places had enough privacy (62 percent).

Exhibit 5.3 Student Perceptions about Campus Meeting Spaces

	Percent of Students Who:				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The space where my coach and I meet has the privacy I need.	3%	9%	27%	43%	19%
The location(s) where I meet with my coach has all the resources (like access to internet) that we need.	1%	2%	11%	55%	31%
The location(s) where I meet with my coach is convenient for me.	1%	1%	9%	50%	38%

Source: SBC Student survey, Q21: “How much do you agree with the following statements about your meetings with your current coach”; Items 1 and 2, N = 341 and Missing = 2 Item 3, N= 338 and Missing =5;

Note: 71 students were excluded because they met with coaches at off-campus locations and 54 were excluded because of insufficient meeting location information.

5.3 Learning Points

This chapter examined the supportive structures in place at the nonprofit organizations that facilitate coaching, as well as related features of the college context in which coaches often work. These structures provide the foundation for transition coaching. Our findings suggest that, while key structures are in place, there remain some areas in which structures could be strengthened.

Simply put, the seven nonprofit organizations structure their transition coaching differently, even though they share many elements (related to coaching). For example, the organizations had similar requirements for hiring coaches, and expected coaches to engage in similar activities in their direct work with students. These core commonalities reflect the underlying shared goal: helping students enroll in and complete college. The findings also revealed substantial variation—especially in terms of coaches’ caseloads. For some coaches, large SBC caseloads meant regular challenges in successful communication with and tracking their assigned students. Further, some coaches reported caseloads with both SBC and non-SBC students. Caseloads with over 60 students created situations in which coaches struggled to spend an adequate amount of time with each student.

The organizations were similar in provision of orientation and training to coaches; all seven nonprofit organizations provide some training, yet coaches reported that they need additional training on such topics as students’ personal and emotional needs. Strengthening transition coaching could occur through expanded training and professional development opportunities for coaches. Another difference across organizations surfaced in the area of training and professional development—including participation in Success Boston network activities, which represent a meaningful opportunity for coaches to understand and connect to the Success Boston Coaching program as a whole. Specifically, the nonprofit organizations do not consistently require coaches to attend the quarterly SBC meetings or other SBC activities, yet participation in such meetings was characterized as useful. The SBC network provides a consistent program-wide forum for information sharing, and more coordinated, program-wide meetings and events could enhance collaboration, foster the ongoing development of best practices, and help coaches connect with the program as a whole.

Overall, coaches’ reports bring to light varying levels of integration and engagement with college campuses. All the coaches reported that connecting students to resources, both on and off campus,

was an important aspect of transition coaching. And while two colleges provided training, orientation or included coaches in support services staff meetings, the program as a whole operates on many more than two campuses. Coaches whose students attended other colleges had to learn about student support services on their own. The campuses also varied in their provision—or lack thereof—of designated office or meeting spaces for coaches to can meet with students. Meeting in public spaces with students presented advantages and challenges for the SBC coaches. However, regardless of where they met on-campus, overall, students reported being satisfied with the location.

Keeping abreast of students' academic progress is a key feature of transition coaching. Coaches primarily accessed data on students through students sharing their login credentials to their colleges' student portals or logging into the portals directly with students during meetings. A few coaches reported having direct access to student information via the college's data system. For the most part, coaches were able to access student records in a timely manner, which allowed them to keep track of student progress and identify potential problems.

The variation in the ability of coaches to integrate their work on college campus suggests the potential value of campus-based orientation sessions for coaches, whether once each year or perhaps each semester; similarly, it may be helpful for SBC to convene meetings on campuses that include the SBC coaches as well as key campus support staff. Working with colleges to designate space for coaches to meet with students on campus could improve coaches' ability to provide support to students. These suggestions may contribute to greater integration of transition coaching in the college campuses.

6. Coaching Activities

This chapter describes how students are recruited to participate in SBC and what, how, and when coaching supports are provided once students enter the program. It relies on data from three sources; interviews with coaches, student survey results, and Salesforce data.

Key Findings:

- The majority of recruitment efforts occurred while students were in high school. Nonprofit organizations continued to recruit students early in the fall semester.
- Nonprofit organizations received some referrals, and some student assignments, directly from colleges.
- Summer activities are not consistently offered to students across the nonprofit organizations.
- Nonprofit organizations varied in how often and how regularly their coaches met with students.
- Coaches reported that they focused on academic support more often than on other topics, although they tailored services according to individual students' needs.
- The large majority of students characterized their experiences with SBC as positive.
- Students reported that financial aid counseling and FAFSA completion were the topics most commonly discussed with their coaches, and the topics about which coaches were viewed as most helpful.

6.1 Recruitment Strategies

Nonprofit organizations relied upon a variety of recruitment strategies to find students and fill their caseloads. The organizations all recruited students during high school; several had intensive high school programs that functioned as direct pipelines to SBC. Not surprisingly, the majority of students (89 percent) noted they had first learned about SBC while in high school (see Exhibit 6.1). Students had heard about SBC through various channels, including presentations from the nonprofit organization at a high school, a nonprofit coach, an afterschool or summer program, or high school or college staff. Less than one-fifth of SBC students (18 percent) had learned about SBC from a friend or neighborhood acquaintance or via independent web-browsing. The local area colleges and universities also referred students to the nonprofit organizations.

Exhibit 6.1 How Students Learned about SBC

	# of Students	% of Students
Someone from a SB coaching organization came to my high school	162	38%
My HS guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member referred me to SB	133	31%
A friend from my high school suggested that I learn more	53	12%
I heard about SB during an after-school or summer program	36	8%
I learned about the SB coaching program directly from my coach	86	20%
I learned about SB from my college/university	68	16%
A friend from my college suggested that I learn more	14	4%
I don't recall exactly	27	6%
I found out about SB online	11	3%
Someone I know from my neighborhood suggested that I learn more	10	2%
Other	10	2%

Source: SBC Student Survey, Q3: “How did you first hear about Success Boston?”, N = 428, Missing = 40

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple options.

All seven nonprofits had a footprint in local high schools, whether through high school pipeline programs or regular recruitment visits to local high schools. Directors and coaches described high school recruitment activities as following a predictable annual cycle that begins in late winter/early spring. For example, at Organization C, coaches began planning recruitment activities in January, by reaching out to high school guidance counselors and other staff to schedule times to meet with referred students. Then another coach at Organization C noted that she and her fellow coaches aimed to be at local high schools later in the spring semester on “decision day” when students typically announce where they plan to attend college, so that the coaches can capitalize on students’ high interest in college-going. A coach from a different organization, which had usually recruited students at the end of each spring, noted that they had begun to recruit earlier in the year because they realized it is difficult to connect with students when they “have a lot going on” including prom and graduation in late spring.

High school recruitment strategies included:

- setting up information tables in school hallways;
- coordinating with school counselors to refer students;
- identifying students from previous participation in an organization’s programming;
- participating in college fairs at target high schools; and
- accepting referrals from other nonprofits (generally limited to instances when this can connect students to coaches more familiar with the students’ chosen college).

Four of the nonprofit organizations had highly structured pipeline programs that focused on college readiness.

- Organization E worked with students in their junior and senior years of high school and focused on helping students identify a college that is a good match in terms of academic and

financial fit. Support for these students extended into college, and students transitioned to a new coach who provided support while they were in college.

- Coaches from Organization G offered several different kinds of opportunities for high school students, including 1:1 mentoring, college trips, college shadowing, job shadowing. These coaches also led workshops for young men to talk about sex and sexuality, among other discussion group topics.
- Organization B worked with students beginning in the second semester of their junior year in high school. The program provided help to students with college admission materials and financial aid applications. It also offered summer workshops focused on drafting college entrance essays, how college course credits work, and how to take advantage of resources on campus.
- Organization D offered a structured program for engaging and preparing high school students for college with embedded programming in two local high schools. Coaches worked with students in grades 9-12, and targeted seniors more specifically with an intensive case management program just for twelfth graders. Two coaches were assigned to each school; one worked in the classrooms and the other as the case manager.

The other three organizations offered diverse programming to high school students, ranging from groups focused on different topics, such as leadership, music, and civic engagement, as well as tutoring, which while not explicitly focused on improving students' access to college, helped to identify potential students for recruitment into SBC.

The high school recruitment process also allowed for coordinated and flexible recruitment between nonprofit organizations; specifically, coaches referred students to another organization if students had enrolled in colleges where their own organization did not have a presence. A coach from Organization G noted that if some of their high school students decided to attend Framingham State, for example, those students were referred to another organization better able to support students attending that particular college. The coach explained, "We only care about the youth being supported." A coach from another organization also appreciated knowing that students could be referred to another coaching organization if that program had a more direct relationship with another college or university.

After high school, coaches continued to fill their caseloads, and one source of students was college referrals. Five coaches (of 19) described working relationships with colleges in which the college sent referrals to the coach; this was reported as most commonly occurring at UMass Boston, Bunker Hill, and Mass Bay Community College. Three nonprofit organizations reached out directly to colleges for referrals. Organization E reported that the relationships its coaches developed with colleges really benefitted their organization when it came time to recruit new students.

Taking it a step further, some colleges explicitly assigned students to nonprofit organizations. One coach noted this could be challenging, as students assigned to her by a college were unresponsive to phone calls, text messages, and emails and did not attend any of her events. While she wanted to help as many students as possible, she also felt that she was more effective when students had chosen to work with her rather than having been assigned. Future evaluation efforts will include interviews with college staff to gather additional details on how colleges assign and /or refer students to the nonprofit organizations.

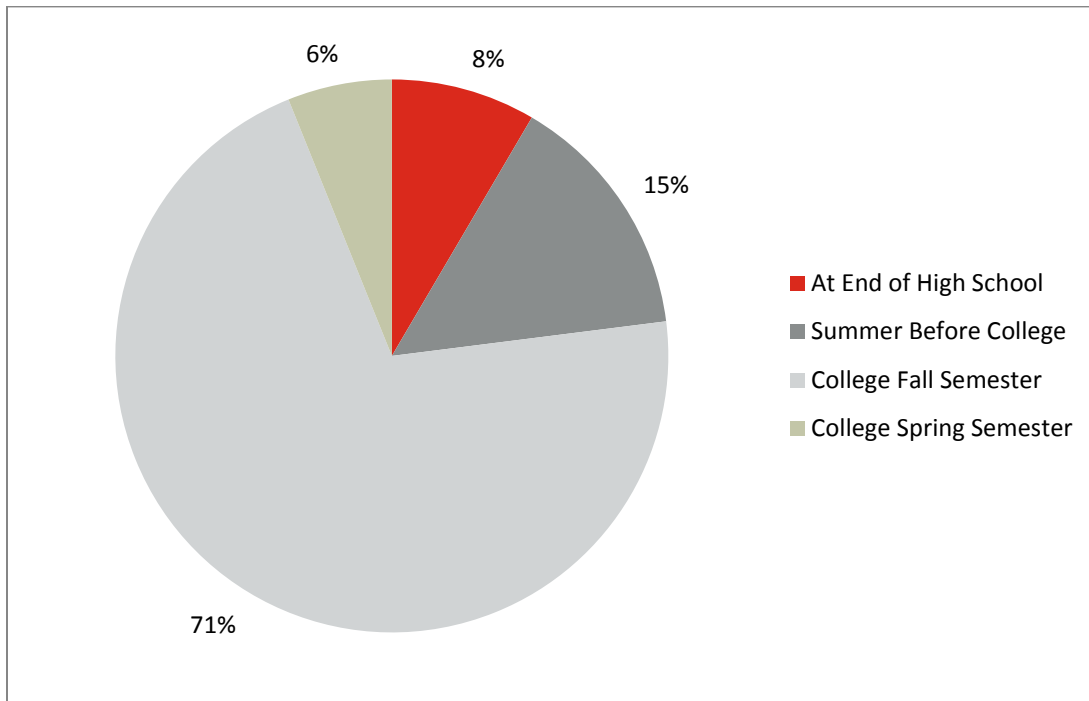
6.2 Coaching Activities

Data gathered from directors, coaches, Salesforce, and students (See Appendix E for selected quotes from students about their experiences with SBC coaching) illustrate what the transition coaching activities look like and when they occur. These data reveal the commonalities and differences in how each organization implements SBC. For example, coaches from all organizations reported that they reach out to and communicate with students using text messaging as well as other modes of communication. The nonprofit organizations differed, however, in the intensity of summer activities offered to students and how often and how regularly coaches met with students.

6.2.1 Start of Coaching

Coaching started at different time points, occurred via diverse activities, and varied across students. The majority of students (71 percent) first interacted with SBC in the fall of their first semester of college (Exhibit 6.2), while 23 percent of students had their first interaction earlier, eight percent at the end of high school and 15 percent during the summer between high school and college.²²

Exhibit 6.2 Timing of Students' First Coaching Interaction



Source: Salesforce, N= 423 interactions

Note: To ensure that data from Salesforce are comparable over time, this exhibit includes only 2014 Cohort students (data were recorded differently for 2013 Cohort students and therefore are not directly comparable). 18 students were excluded from this exhibit because date information was missing.

²² There is no official rule of when students should first be entered into Salesforce, and data recording practices vary across organizations such that some coaches upload student information immediately after first contact while others wait until the first transition support meeting to upload any student information.

While few students had their first official SBC interaction (as recorded in Salesforce) during the summer, five of the nonprofit organizations did offer summer activities and programs for students transitioning to college in the fall. (See details in Exhibit 6.3.) However, because most coaches did not systematically record summer participation as interactions in Salesforce, it is not possible to determine whether coaching support began prior to start of the fall semester for a larger number of students than were documented in Salesforce data for summer 2014.

Exhibit 6.3 Summer Programs and Activities, by Organization

Organization *	Summer Program Features
Organization A	Offered three summer sessions, one each in June, July and August. The June session was a general orientation during which students met each other as well as all the coaches in the organization. In July, the session focused on helping students match their interests with fields of study. In August students attended campus tours, received support for completing remaining financial aid and application paperwork and enrolling in classes.
Organization C	Offered limited summer programming with an orientation session, which provided students with an overview of the college system and workshops on financial aid, registration and setting a class schedule.
Organization D	Conducted workshops for students over the summer. Topics generally included completing college applications, finding employment on campus, and other general information to help students prepare for the fall semester
Organization E	<p>Held one-on-one “checklist” meeting with students the summer before enrolling in college. The meetings, sometimes attended by parents, ensured students were prepared for their first semester. The students met with an Organization E coach, although not necessarily the coach with whom they would be paired with in college, to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of attending their college’s orientation • Usernames, passwords, and navigating student access portals • FERPA waivers and health insurance forms • Meal plans and plans for paying their bills.
Organization G	Offered a six week summer academy where students received support completing financial aid documents and applying for jobs and also attended workshops (e.g., work/life balance workshop). Students were generally grouped by type of college, two-year or four-year.

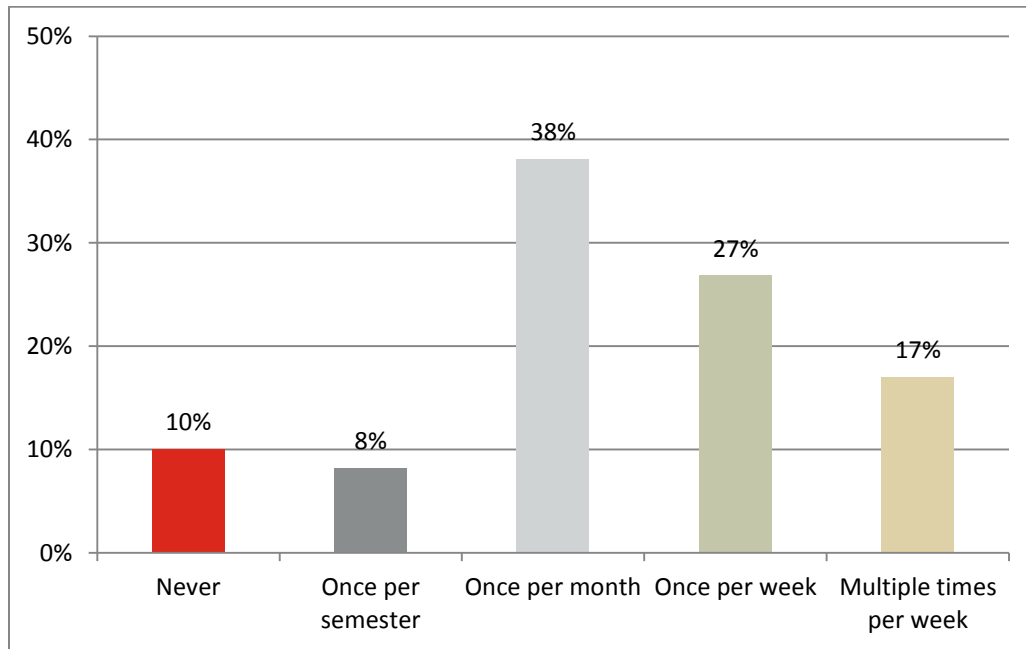
Source: Director Interviews, Coach Interviews

* Note: Five of seven organizations provided summer coaching

6.2.2 Modes of Communication

Once SBC coaching began, coaches regularly communicated with students through email, phone calls and text messages, and sometimes through Facebook conversations. All 19 coaches reported using at least two modes of communication to contact their students throughout the school year, and 10 reported using four or more different modes. Fifteen coaches used email and text messages most frequently, while social media was a less popular outlet for engagement. Only four coaches (from three organizations) reported using Facebook for any communication to students. Students confirmed the coach reports; the majority (approximately 80 percent) reported that coaches contacted them via text message at least once per month (see Exhibit 6.4).

Exhibit 6.4 How Often Coaches Reach Out to Students via Text Message



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q5 “In general, how often does your current coach usually get in touch with you in the following ways?”, N= 441, Missing = 27

Coaches reported using text messages and email for a variety of purposes, including:

- scheduling appointments with students;
- sending out reminders about upcoming deadlines (FAFSA, registration, drop/add);
- alerting students to job, internship and scholarship opportunities;
- personal support (e.g., wishing them good luck on exams); and
- sending a summary or review of issues discussed at one-on-one meetings.

Five coaches explicitly expressed a preference for text messaging over emailing students, explaining that they found it to be more effective for reaching students. As one coach elaborated, most students did not respond to emails, perhaps because they had too many unread messages in their inboxes. Another coach indicated that email was her last resort for contacting students, and if she needed to reach all her students, she sent a mass email, quickly followed by text messages asking students to check their inboxes.

Coaches also reported having phone conversations with students, both those initiated by the coaches and those initiated by students. One coach reported that students could reach her on the weekends if necessary. Another reported that she used phone calls to coach her students from a distance, because they attended colleges all over Boston. She reported that she spoke with some students on the phone regularly. “It’s easier” she said “to really get a sense of how a student is doing through phone calls when you can hear their voice.” Overall, phone calls were another important communication channel for coaches when they were unable to reach students in-person or when students needed on-demand support and reached out to coaches.

Four coaches reported communicating with students via social media, chiefly Facebook. One coach reported using her organization’s Facebook account to contact students; another asserted that using Facebook nurtured a more informal relationship with her students.

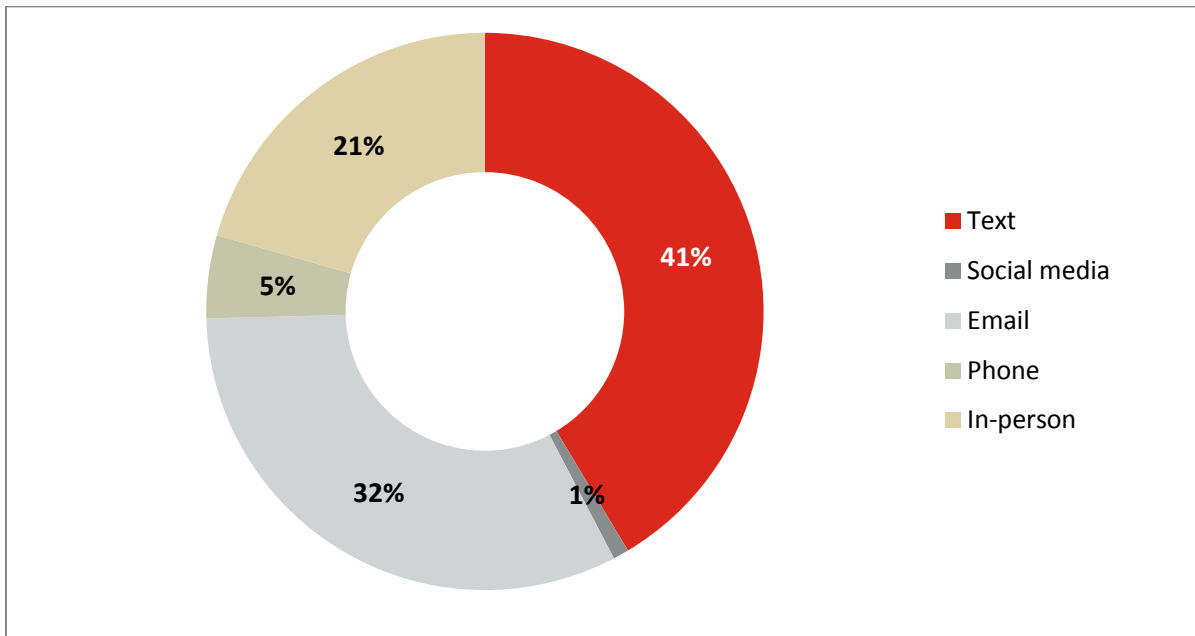
While text messages were the most frequently used mode of coach-to-student communication, coaches roundly preferred in-person meetings for communicating with students. Coaches viewed other modes of communication as convenient ways to supplement in-person meetings. They used text messages, phone calls, emails, and social media to access students who they could not reach in-person or who needed reminders or extra encouragement.

Strategies coaches use to help students follow-through after meetings include:

- Giving students summary notes from their meetings including reminders of things to do.
- Calling students to follow up after individual meetings.
- Sending text messages summarizing meetings.

Students also frequently communicated with their coaches via text messages; 70 percent of students reported communicating via text messages once a month or more. Forty-one percent of students preferred text messaging and 32 percent preferred email, and less than a quarter (21 percent) of students preferred meeting coaches in person (see Exhibit 6.5)

Exhibit 6.5 Students’ Preferred Mode of Communication with Coaches



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q7: “How do you prefer to get in touch with your current coach?”, N= 437, Missing = 31

6.2.3 Frequency of Support Interactions

The number of meetings per student generally depended on time of year, whether students were freshmen or sophomores, and students' individual needs. Eleven coaches (from six organizations) reported that the frequency of their meetings with students varied, although they tried to meet regularly, either weekly or monthly. One organization required a predetermined number of meetings per semester. All coaches indicated that they reached out to students often during their first semester to encourage them to attend one-on-one meetings. Sixteen reported setting goals for how often they planned to meet with first-year students and the topics they aimed to cover with students during this time. Coaches from the other six organizations reported that they met with first-year students regularly, either weekly or biweekly and that they reached out less frequently to second-year students. As students transitioned into their second year, eight coaches reported having less frequent meetings, reflecting the fact that students were both busier and more acclimated to college by their sophomore year. As a result, they expected second-year students to be better advocates for themselves, and to take more initiative in reaching out for support. Two coaches noted that in general, "hand-holding" was more common during students' first than second year.

The organization that set a required number of meetings, set their requirement at a minimum of four interactions with first year students each semester, with three of the meetings being in-person. When students entered their second year, requirement was reduced three times per semester.

Coaches observed they were particularly engaged in providing support when students had upcoming deadlines. As class registration and FAFSA application deadlines approached, for instance, coaches reached out to students, and students also reached out to coaches to set up meetings. Coaches reported scheduling meetings with students and holding open office hours for students to drop in.

To ease the transition of first year students, one coach reported meeting with students in groups. During these meetings the coach checked-in with students to see if they had registered for classes and gone to orientation.

Some coaches had enough flexibility in managing their caseloads to adjust their calendars and thereby give more

attention to students who needed it while relaxing the calendar for more self-reliant students.

- A coach at Organization A, for instance, explained that he separated students into three tiers: students who need *intensive support*, students who need *moderate support*, and students who are *relatively independent*. The coach then provided support accordingly at each level. This meant meeting with students who needed more support on a weekly basis, and checking in less frequently with independent students.
- Another coach from Organization E discussed a tracking system in which she labeled her students according to traffic light colors, as red, yellow, or green. She met more frequently with students she characterized as red, moderately with those deemed yellow, and occasionally with those in the green category.

Coaches documented how much time they spent per student interaction in Salesforce. On average, meetings that included academic topics lasted longest, taking 27 minutes; meetings addressing personal topics were 25 minutes, those addressing career and financial aid were roughly 20 minutes,

while meetings about other administrative topics generally were shorter (18 minutes).²³ Coaches' recollections of the meeting length suggested that in-person meetings varied depending on student need, but generally were between 30 and 60 minutes. For example, in cases where a follow-up with the financial aid offices or the writing center was necessary, one-on-one meetings were noted as lasting over an hour.

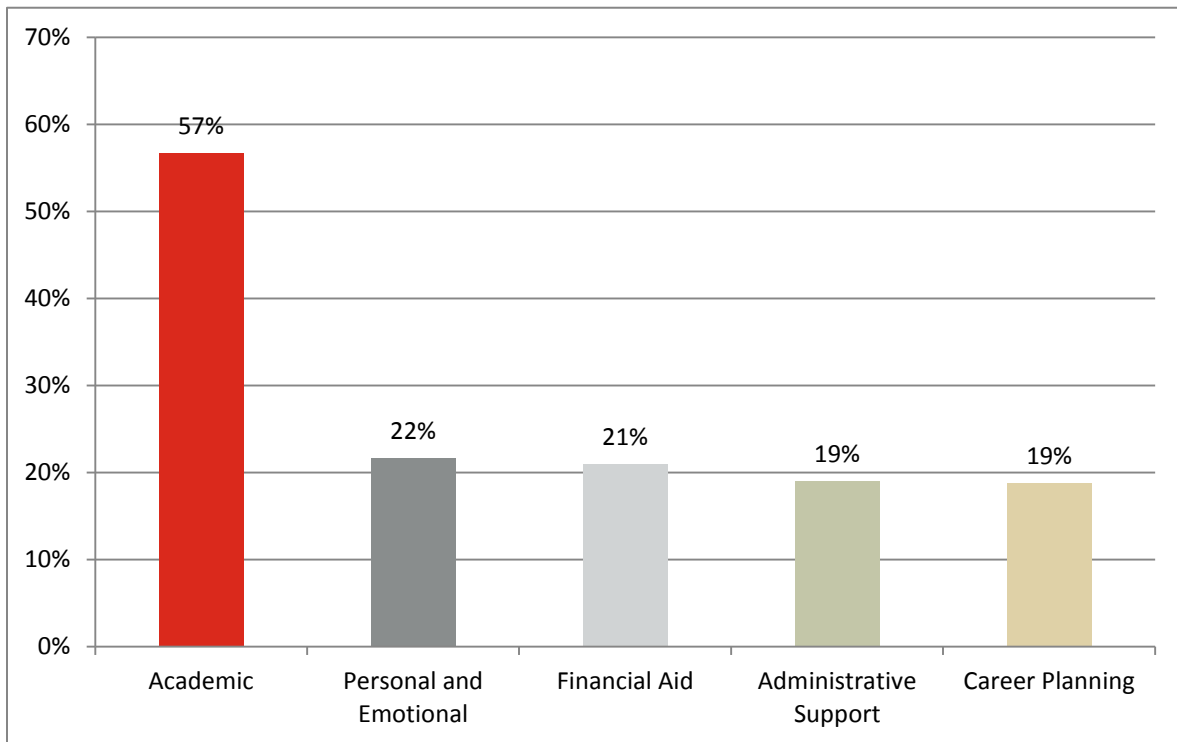
Sometimes meetings occurred in groups rather than one-on-one. A coach from Organization A explained that in addition to one-on-one meetings, last year she organized a lunch for all her first year students in the middle of fall semester to give them an opportunity to meet each other and to forge a Success Boston identity. She explained, "A lot of them came from the same high school, so they were familiar with each other already and a lot of them didn't even realize that they were at the same school so it was good for them to connect. Just explaining to them that you are a Success Boston student and really explaining to them how to identify us a group and myself as a coach." Sometimes coaches used events hosted at the nonprofit organizations to check-in informally with students.

6.2.4 Topics of Support

SBC coaches provided students with help across a range of areas: academics and career planning, accessing campus resources, assistance with the financial aid process, assistance with transferring to a new institution, personal and emotional support, navigating college systems, and time management. Exhibit 6.6 depicts the percent of support interactions by topic, as recorded in Salesforce. All recorded interactions are counted, including in-person, phone, email, and text communications. Academic support (e.g., reviewing course syllabi, course selection and degree planning, connecting students to on campus tutoring services) was by far the most prevalent topic; 63 percent of all 8,685 coaching interactions from 2014-2015 included an academic focus. The other support topics (financial aid, career planning, personal and emotional support, and administrative support) were less common, and were addressed during roughly one of five interactions.

²³ Note that Salesforce data do not allow disaggregation of minutes spent on each topic. Instead, data are recorded such that the full interaction length is included as well as *all* topics covered in that particular interaction.

Exhibit 6.6 Topics Covered during Coaching Interactions, 2014-2015

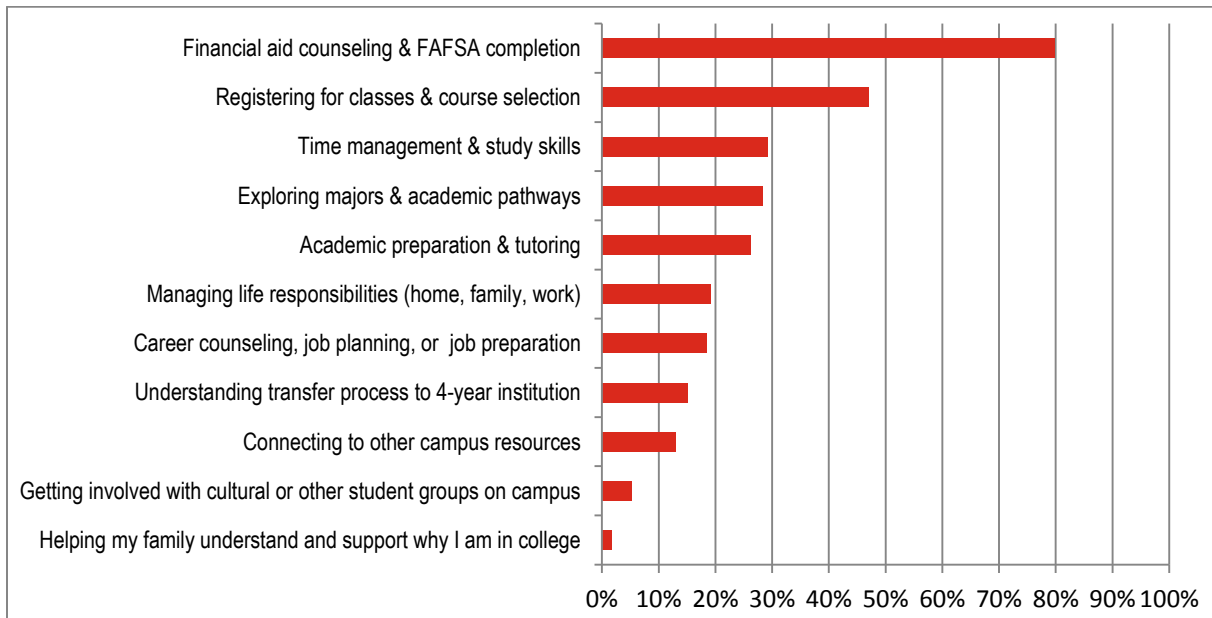


Source: Salesforce, N = 8,685 coaching interaction records

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple topics could be covered in a single interaction. Interaction records can be assigned more than one topic. Seventy two records with no topic indicated are excluded from this column. One additional record with no duration recorded was also excluded.

The student survey allowed for a more detailed investigation about the specific topics discussed between coaches and students during in-person meetings. Students reported on the top three topics discussed with coaches (see Exhibit 6.7). While not necessarily reflected in the Salesforce data, the topic of financial aid counseling and FAFSA completion (listed as a single topic) was cited most frequently; 80 percent of students ranked this in their top three. It should be noted, however, that “academic support” was not an option in the student survey. The survey broke out the broad topic of academics into four subtopics that included: registering for classes and course selection, time management and study skills, exploring majors and academic pathways, and academic preparation and tutoring. These four topics were ranked after financial aid counseling and FAFSA completion; if combined, however, into one broad “academic support” topic, it would represent the top-ranked item.

Exhibit 6.7 Most Commonly Discussed Topics during In-Person Meetings



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q11: "Thinking about this school year (2014-2015), please select the three topics you discussed in-person with your coach", N=417, Missing=51

Academic support

Academic support, particularly as students began their college careers, was a primary focus of SBC. Seventeen (of 19) coaches reported that they provided students with academic support, ranging from connecting them with tutors, to helping them communicate with professors, to coaching students about study habits prior to midterms and final exams.

During the first year, coaches reported working with students on:

- Course selection and registration; twelve coaches reported helping students with class registration topics, such as choosing the right classes, switching classes before add/drop deadlines, and getting into classes where students were on the waitlist;
- understanding class schedules;
- learning how to seek help from their professors;
- reviewing their class syllabi; and,
- advising students to begin planning for major assignments and exams.

"I was struggling in one of my class[es] and I thought I was going to fail the class. When I told my coach about it, she said talking to my professor could help. I ended up talking to my professor of that class and found out why I am struggling, and the professor was willing to help me. I ended up doing pretty good in that class."

—SBC Student

Later into the first year and as students continued into their sophomore year, coaches reported that they continued to meet with students to check in regarding academic performance. Six coaches from Organization E reported meeting with students in the spring for mid-semester academic check-ins. As

one coach from Organization A explained, second semester check-ins were an opportunity to reevaluate a student's academic performance "[we] look at grades and start talking about what happened. What can you do differently? Was this work related? Was this family related? We try to probe in those areas." When students entered their second year, conversations shifted to finding internships, thinking about career goals, and encouraging students to declare a major.

Support with Financial Aid

Coaches also prioritize ensuring that students are able to pay for college. Seventeen coaches from all seven organizations emphasized the importance of supporting students through the financial aid process. Coaches met with students individually to talk about financial aid and referred students to the financial aid office for further assistance.

- Conversations about financial aid took place while students were seniors in high school preparing to enroll in college as well as after students enrolled and needed to renew their FAFSA.
- Coaches from two organizations reported hosting financial aid nights for students and parents.
- Five coaches reported talking to students about loans. One coach explained that, during one-on-one meetings, she logged into the students' accounts to help them understand what an unsubsidized loan and lender were.
- Two coaches reported that their conversations about financial aid often led to conversations about time management and prioritizing school over work. Coaches worked with students to make sure they were aware of upcoming deadlines and scholarship opportunities.

In addition to support from coaches regarding financial aid, at ten events throughout the school year the non-profit organization, uAspire, provided direct support to SBC students focused on successfully filling out financial aid forms.

Time Management

Time management was an essential skill that coaches focused on as their students began their college careers. Coaches worked with students on time management skills because they believed it was strongly linked to student academic performance. As students transitioned into the more flexible daily schedules of college, coaches helped them learn how to organize and use their time efficiently. One coach described how moving from the very structured high school day to the more open college schedule gave students the impression that they had "so much time on their hands." He worked to help

"As we all know college is not cheap. There are loans to pay, books to buy, and deposits to make. This semester I am currently struggling financially so at the beginning of this semester my coach told me about a scholarship that they had which was that they were able to buy one of my books. I was grateful for their help and it was a challenge they definitely helped me get through."

—SBC Student

"I was swamped in my first semester of college, and didn't have much motivation to do my best during the semester. My coach helped me obtain my confidence and gave me time management skills when I met up with her, explaining to her my problem. Now, in my second semester, I have am more confident with my work and do my work ahead of time."

—SBC Student

students identify strategies to make good use of the open time between classes. Thirteen coaches described efforts to help students learn how to manage their free time and how to balance work and school, which could be a common challenge given that the majority (68 percent) of SBC students reported that they work while in college.

Administrative Support

Almost all of the coaches (17) reported that many of the early transition support services they provided to students included helping students understand how to navigate a college setting.

- Organization E coaches reported that they required Success Boston students to attend at least one or two events during the summer. During these meetings, they jointly reviewed a checklist of items, including how to pay a bill, how to choose classes, how to waive their health insurance, and how to navigate the student portal, among other topics, to help introduce students to college. One coach explained that at this stage students are looking for direction.
- Seven coaches reported helping students access their student portals and learn what types of information were available to them on their student accounts.
- Twelve coaches who worked with students in community colleges helped students navigate and plan for the transfer process from a two-year community college to a four-year college.

"[My] goal as a coach is that they're keeping in touch but they're not using you as a crutch...we're going to help you learn all the plays and learn all the moves and then you're going to be able to stand on the field or the court and know what your job is."

—SBC Coach

Comments from open-ended questions on the student survey illustrated how students benefitted from the navigational supports received. One student said:

"Success Boston was like my sidekick—they always had ready-to-go answers for all the typical questions of a nervous freshman, which goes to show and prove how well they do their jobs and how dedicated they are about the things they do. Overall, Success Boston coaching is indeed making a difference as well as positively impacting the lives of many students."

Career Planning

Coaches (17) from all seven organizations specifically indicated that they supported students with career planning, and most reported that these services generally began at the end of students' first year of college. For students in their first and second years of college, career planning often included creating a resume and applying for internships. Thirteen coaches indicated they had helped students to find and apply for internships, and 10 coaches noted that they helped students create and revise their resumes. Coaches from Organization E intentionally focused on employability when students reached the end of their second year; this included updating resumes to include in new work experience and discussing students' preferred jobs and positions.

Personal and Emotional Support

"I think and I hope that there's also a piece of what we do that is not about the curriculum...The value of having someone checking in on you and saying 'How's it going?' ...Whether you take the solution you come up with together or not there's something

valuable about going through that process and knowing 'my coach is with me on this'.” SBC Coach

Beyond academic support, almost all coaches (17) reported they provided personal and emotional support to students as one of the core components of their coaching.

- Coaches reported talking to students about a range of personal challenges, including dating, pregnancy, child care, homelessness, undocumented immigrant status, and family issues. When coaches felt that a student’s personal issues were beyond their training and capacity, they referred students to counseling services on or off campus.
- Coaches referenced students’ personal and emotional support needs primarily in terms of describing the coaches’ successes and challenges. One coach acknowledged that one of her greatest challenges arose when relationships with students did not develop naturally. She added that one way her organization tackled this challenge was by finding other topics or interests, other than academics, that would engage students.
- Two coaches reported that longstanding relationships with students that had begun prior to their participation in SBC made it possible for the students to be more open about their personal lives. One coach observed, “The [organization] is a brand and students believe in the brand, they trust the brand and because of that they trust that we’re there to support them. So we find that even if a student is not as likely to share something significant happening in the household with a parent they might come up to us and say ‘I just found out I was put on academic probation what can I do?’”

“Last spring semester I was being very lazy and stopped doing work. I was very behind in my classes and I had to drop two classes as a result. My coach helped me overcome my disappointment and helped me realize that there was no reason to drown myself with resentment and regret because there were still opportunities for me. With the help of my coach I was able to feel resilient and continue working through stress to overcome my difficult situations.”

–SBC Student

Three other coaches discussed encouraging students and helping them find the confidence to succeed. One coach boasted that one of his accomplishments was helping students who are not yet enrolled to become excited about a specific degree. Another mentioned meeting with students who had withdrawn from classes to speak with them about why they withdrew. This coach reported that she continued to maintain contact and provide support services for students who withdrew until they stated that they no longer wished to receive services. Coaches valued the relationships they created with their students; nine referenced their relationships they have forged with their students when talking about their greatest accomplishments as coaches.

Finally, coaches from two different organizations mentioned civic engagement as an important part of coaching within their organizations. One coach remarked that they go so far as to track alumni to see whether they vote or participate in community events, and another commented that civic engagement was one of five areas his organization’s coaches assessed when meeting with students.

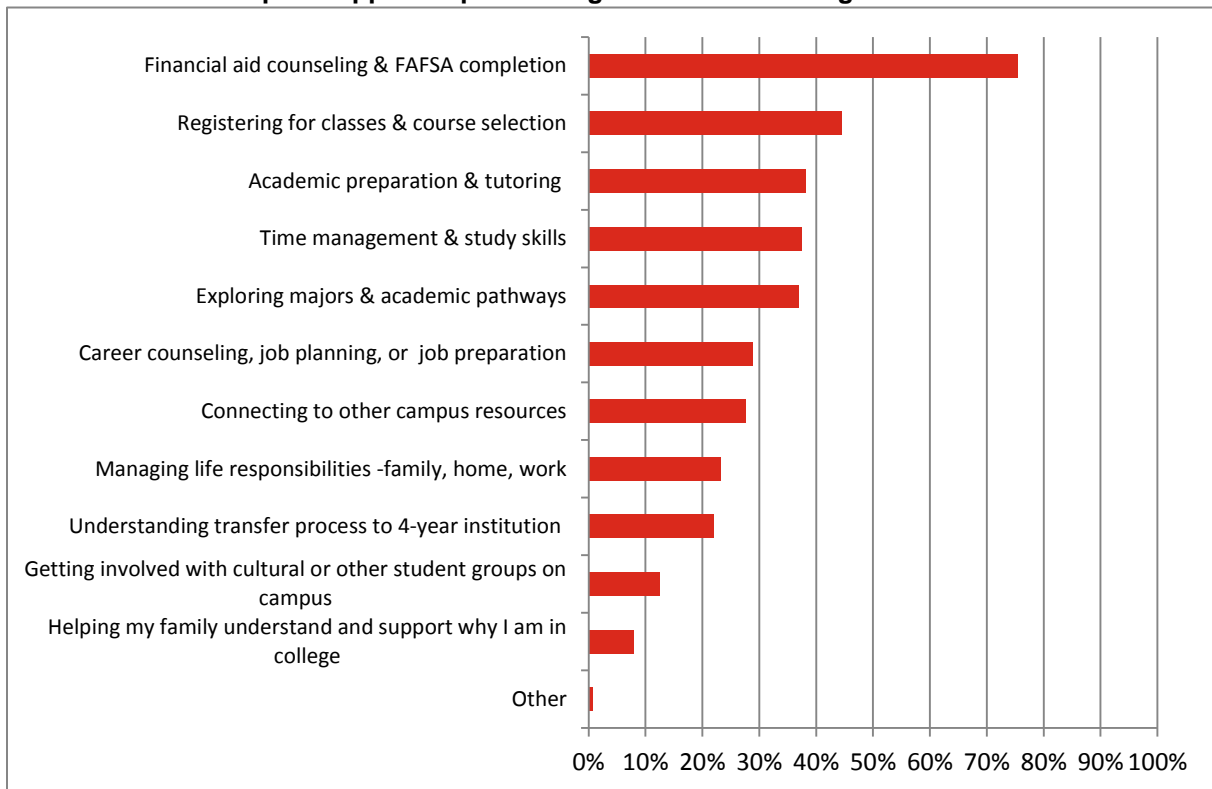
6.3 Student Perceptions of Coaching

Students were asked to respond to survey questions about the perceived helpfulness of coaching, how comfortable they were with their coaches, and their assessment of their relationship with their coaches. Overall, students reported positive experiences working with their Success Boston coach. The majority of students reported that, regardless of the topic of support (i.e. financial aid, academics), they found their coach’s support to be *very* or *somewhat helpful*; over 50 percent of students selected *very* or *somewhat helpful* in response to each of the topics of support.

Students nominated the topics about which their coach had been the *most* helpful during their first year of college (see Exhibit 6.8). Students ranked financial aid counseling and FAFSA completion (a single item) (75 percent), registering for classes and course selection (45 percent) and academic preparation & tutoring (38 percent) as the most helpful. Fewer students, on average, ranked the following topics as areas where their coaches were most helpful:

- Managing life responsibilities, including family, home and work (23 percent),
- Understanding the transfer process to a four-year institution (22 percent),
- Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus (12 percent), and
- Helping my family understand and support why I am in college (8 percent).

Exhibit 6.8 Most Helpful Support Topics during First Year in College

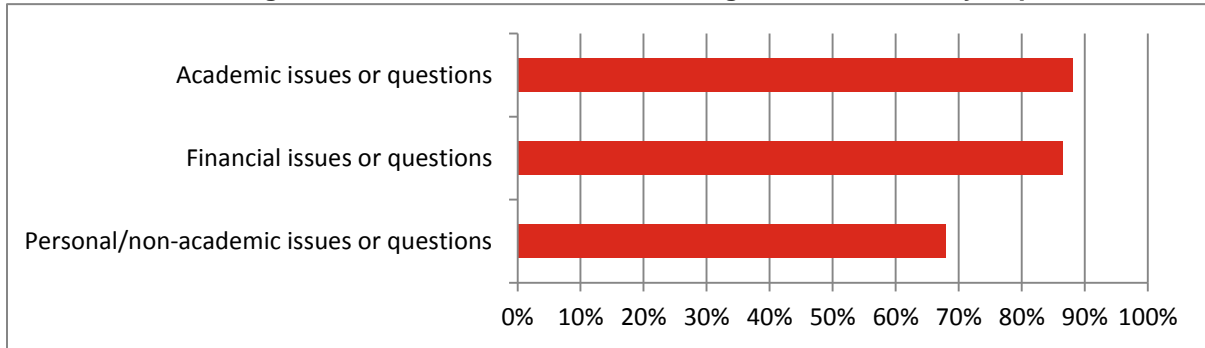


Source: SBC Student Survey, Q44: “Which services or supports provided by your Success Boston coach were most helpful during your first year of college?”, N = 417; Missing = 51

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 because students were asked to select the top three most helpful topics.

Exhibit 6.9 below illustrates that the majority of students reported feeling comfortable reaching out to their coaches across the topic areas, although a greater percent of students expressed comfort discussing academic and financial questions than personal or non-academic issues (88 percent and 86 percent, respectively, versus 68 percent).

Exhibit 6.9 Percentage of Students Comfortable Reaching out to Coaches by Topic



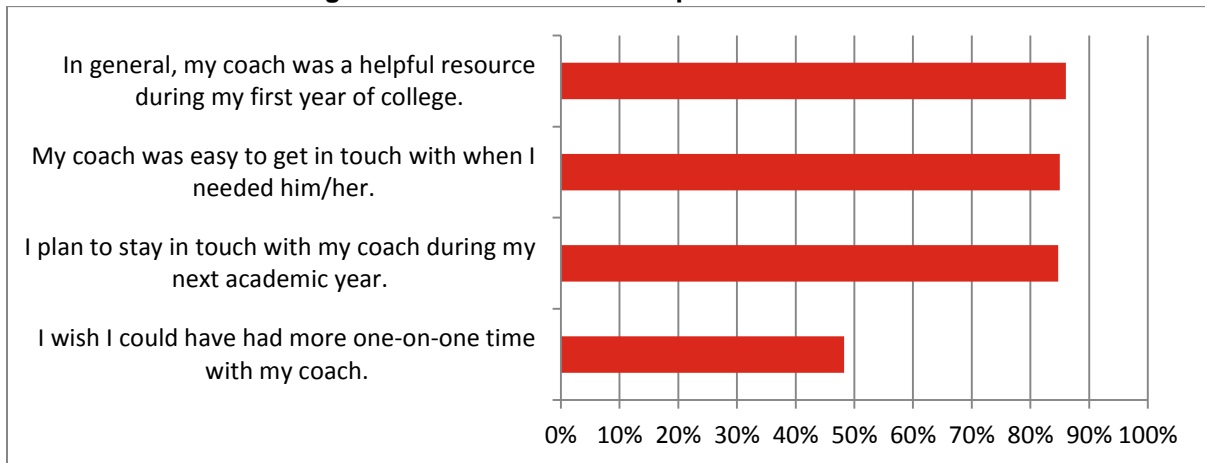
Source: SBC Student Survey, Q16 :“For the following topics, please indicate how much you agree with the statement about your experience working with your current Success Boston coach”, N = 428, Missing = 40 (Academic issues); N = 427, Missing = 41 (Financial and Personal issues)

Note: These results combine students that responded that agree and strongly agree.

Furthermore, the majority of students reported that it was easy for them to get in touch with their coach (85 percent), their coach was generally a helpful resource (86 percent), and that they planned to stay in touch with their coach next year (85 percent) (Exhibit 6.10). One student described her coach as follows:

“Being on academic probation because of last semester, [my coach] sat down with me to talk about what happened. She listened and was very supportive and suggested some options for me to get me back on track. I’m very happy and appreciative to have a coach like her because I’m comfortable to go to her with anything.”

Exhibit 6.10 Student Agreement about Relationship with Coach



Source: SBC Student Survey, Q17:“For the following topics, please indicate how much you agree with the statement about your relationship with a Success Boston coach”, N = 426 (Items 1, 2); 429 (Items 3, 4); Missing = 42 (Items 1, 2); 39 (Items 3, 4)

Note: These results combine students who agree or strongly agree with the statements.

6.4 Learning Points

With supportive structures in place, coaches can actively and effectively recruit students and provide transition supports. All seven of the nonprofit organizations began actively recruiting students during high school, usually during the spring semester, and continued recruitment efforts into the college fall semester. Four organizations had highly structured high school programs that serve as a key pipeline for SBC activities. Other nonprofit organizations relied on visiting high schools, participating in college fairs and working with guidance counselors to identify students for SBC while they are still enrolled in high school. Student reports also indicated that recruitment most often begins while they are still in high school, as the majority of students reported that was when they first learned about SBC. Students more often than not heard about SBC from the nonprofit organization, their coaches, or high school staff or college staff.

Completing the complex and time-consuming financial aid forms can be an impediment to college enrollment, and coaching during the summer months may help college-intending students by providing support with financial aid applications and other key forms required to enter college (Arnold, et al., 2009; Castleman and Page, 2014; Roderick, Nagaoka, Coca, and Moeller, 2008). Five organizations offered summer programming for incoming freshmen. The summer coaching activities focused on completing applications and financial aid forms, selecting courses and navigating the college system. As noted, these supports are key to reducing the risk of summer melt; unfortunately, summer programming activities are not well captured in Salesforce. Expanding summer programming across all nonprofits could act to strengthen the relationship between coaches and students as well as increase the likelihood that students will matriculate in the fall. It may also be important for the program to strengthen expectations for nonprofit organizations to account accurately for participation summer activities, and ensure that Salesforce has the capacity for organizations to record and track their summer programming.

Once the college semester begins in the fall, nonprofits organizations have different relationships set up with the colleges to continue filling their caseloads, such as receiving formal assignments from colleges and general referrals from college staff. Further exploration of the processes colleges use to connect students to nonprofit organizations is needed, although information from coaching interviews suggests that referring students who have requested coaching may be more effective in generating an engaged caseload than simply assigning students without their active engagement in the process.

Nonprofit coaching organizations varied in the processes—when, where, and how often they met with students—through which their coaches implemented SBC. Organizations varied in how often and how regularly their coaches met with students. The amount of communication and contact coaches have with students may contribute to differences in outcomes between students receiving coaching relative to students that do not (Castleman, Page, and Schooley, 2014). Frequency of communication seems to be a documented strength of SBC coaching, as coaches and students communicate often, as evidenced by the 8,685 transition support interactions logged into Salesforce for the 2014-2015 school year. Increasing the consistency of coaching program-wide could occur via establishing a minimum threshold for semester interactions.

Such services as financial aid support, course selection and time management are linked with college persistence and graduation (Castleman and Page, 2014; Bird and Castleman, 2014; Public Agenda 2009). SBC coaches clearly provide support to students on these topics. Coaches across all seven organizations designated academics as the focus of support meetings three times more often than

other topic areas. In addition, the majority of coaches also reported that they provided support on each of the topics to at least one student, suggesting that coaches are tailoring the services they provide to individual student needs.

Generally, students had positive experiences with the coaching services they received. Students found their coaches easy to reach, and believed the advice and input their SBC coaches provided were helpful; over 80 percent reported that their coach was a helpful resource during their first year of college. Specifically, financial aid counseling and FAFSA completion were the most salient topics for students, and were also the topics about which students were most comfortable discussing with their coach.

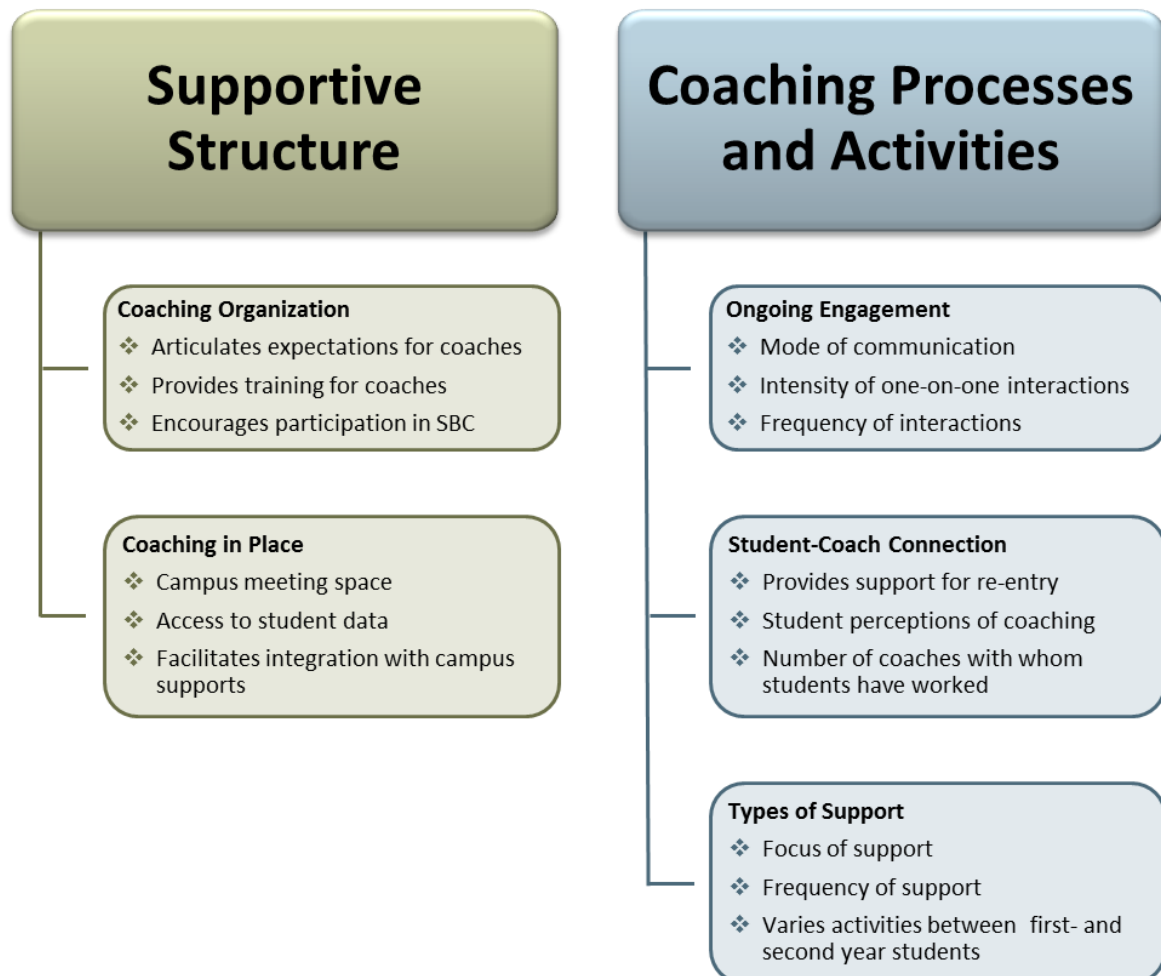
7. Implementation Index

The evaluation team worked closely with the Boston Foundation to develop an implementation index to summarize and synthesize information about implementation program-wide during the 2014-2015 school year. The index integrates information from multiple data sources, and highlights the similarities and variations across the different organizations' implementation efforts. It helps identify which program components appear to be consistently implemented, and which may be challenging for nonprofit coaching organizations to operationalize, thus identifying the potential for growth in program implementation. The index also represents a measure that will be used to explore relationships between the level of implementation across a variety of indicators and student outcomes in the final outcomes report. Linking the index scores to student outcomes in this way will provide insights into which aspects of implementation matter most in achieving desired student outcomes.

7.1 Structure

The implementation index is organized into two constructs, five components, and 15 indicators, as illustrated in Exhibit 7.1. It draws upon interviews with coaching organization directors and coaches, surveys of students, data from Salesforce, and the document review.

Exhibit 7.1 SBC Implementation Index Structure



The implementation index is comprised of two broad constructs—Supportive Structures (SS) and Coaching Processes and Activities (CPA)—hypothesized as essential to SBC. Supportive Structures includes those features of SBC that lay the foundation and structure for coaches to do their work. Coaching Processes and Activities incorporates the ways in which coaches work and the specific actions they take in support of students. These two constructs contain five components: *Coaching Organizations (SS)*, *Coaching in Place (SS)*, *Ongoing Engagement (CPA)*, *Student-Coach Connection (CPA)*, and *Transition Activities (CPA)*.

Component 1: Coaching Organization

The *Coaching Organization* component consists of three indicators: 1) *Articulates expectations for coaches*; 2) *Provides training for coaches*; and 3) *Encourages participation in SBC*. Interviews with the directors at each organization and with coaches were the primary data sources for these indicators. Documents describing each organization and programming served as secondary data sources.

The desired qualifications organizations seek in their coaches, such as level of education, prior experience with youth, experience and competence working with underserved student populations, are included in the *Articulates expectations for coaches* indicator, as are expectations for interactions with students and complying SBC data requirements. Training for coaches reflects provision of basic training or training that was focused on transition coaching skills. *Encourages participation in SBC* includes information about whether participation at program meetings or events is required, required for all and deemed important to the organization. Together, these indicators measure the extent to which nonprofit coaching organizations provide structures and resources for effective implementation of SBC.

Component 2: Coaching in Place

The *Coaching in Place* component reflects how coaches embed themselves on college campuses to provide transition support to students. The indicators of *Coaching in Place* include: 1) *Meeting space on campus*, 2) *Access to student data*, and 3) *Facilitates integration with campus supports*. The primary data sources for the three indicators are the student survey (*meeting space on campus* and *access to student data*) and interviews with coaches (*facilitates integration with campus supports*).

The student survey provides students' perspectives on *campus meeting space*—the level of privacy and resources available as well as whether the location is convenient to the student. *Access to student data* indicates (from student self-report) how academic data are shared with coaches. The *facilitates integration with campus supports* indicator incorporates coaches' reports of whether and how often they had contact with and were included in staff meetings and functions on college campuses.

Component 3: Ongoing Engagement

Ongoing Engagement reflects methods, duration and intensity of engagement and contact with students. The indicators of *Ongoing Engagement* include: 1) *Mode of communication*, 2) *Intensity of one-on-one interactions*, 3) *Frequency of interactions*. The student survey and coach interviews (*mode of communication*) and Salesforce (*intensity of one-on-one interactions*, *frequency of interactions*) are the primary data sources.

Mode of communication is a measure of how often and in how many different ways (modes) coaches communicate with students. It includes information from students on frequency and mode (text message, email, social media, phone, in-person) and coaches on the number of different modes used to reach out to students. The two data sources are combined (averaged) to create one indicator score.

The frequency and intensity indicators incorporate data on the number of interactions (limited to phone or in person) coaches have with students per semester and the duration of each. Taken together, these indicators measure the extent to which coaches maintain consistent, targeted engagement with the students on their caseloads.

Component 4: Student-Coach Connections

Student-Coach Connections is measured by three indicators: 1) *Provides support for re-engagement*; 2) *Student perceptions of coaching*; and 3) *Number of coaches* with whom students have worked. Primary data sources for this component include interviews with coaches and the student survey.

This component includes student reports of how helpful coaches have been, the ease with which students can reach out and communicate with their coach, and the stability of coaching. Coaches' reports of active efforts to re-engage students no longer enrolled in college are also included.

Component 5: Transition Activities

The *Transition Activities* component reflects the content of transition coaching; it is comprised of three indicators, each measured by a different data source: 1) *Focus of support*, 2) *Exposure to support*, and 3) *Varies activities between first and second year students*. Primary data sources for this component include the student survey, Salesforce, and interviews with coaches.

The student survey provides information on the broad topics coaches covered with students as part of transition coaching as well as how often coaches provided help on a given topic. The transition support topics explored in the survey include: academic support, career and future planning support, financial aid questions and support, general enrollment support, and managing life responsibilities. *Exposure to support* is a measure of whether a coach provided transition support on a specific topic; it also includes a measure of the extent to which coaches adjusted or varied their coaching activities between students who were in their first year of college and returning college students.

7.2 Applying the Index

Indicator scores ranged from 1 to 3. A score of 1 indicated a low level of implementation of the indicator; a two represented a moderate level of implementation; and a score of three indicated high implementation. Specific thresholds for each indicator of the index were determined using an iterative process and based on an understanding of the SBC program.

Indicator scores were summed to create component scores. As noted above, each component was measured by three indicators, meaning that component scores ranged from 3 to 9. A component score of 8 or 9 indicated a high level of implementation; scores of 6 or 7 represented a moderate level of implementation; and scores of 5 or below indicated a low level of implementation. Descriptions of high, medium and low implementation for each component are included in the following sections.

Component scores were summed to create construct scores, and finally the construct scores were summed to create a total index score for each coaching organization. The total score for the index ranged from the lowest possible score of 15 to a maximum score of 45.

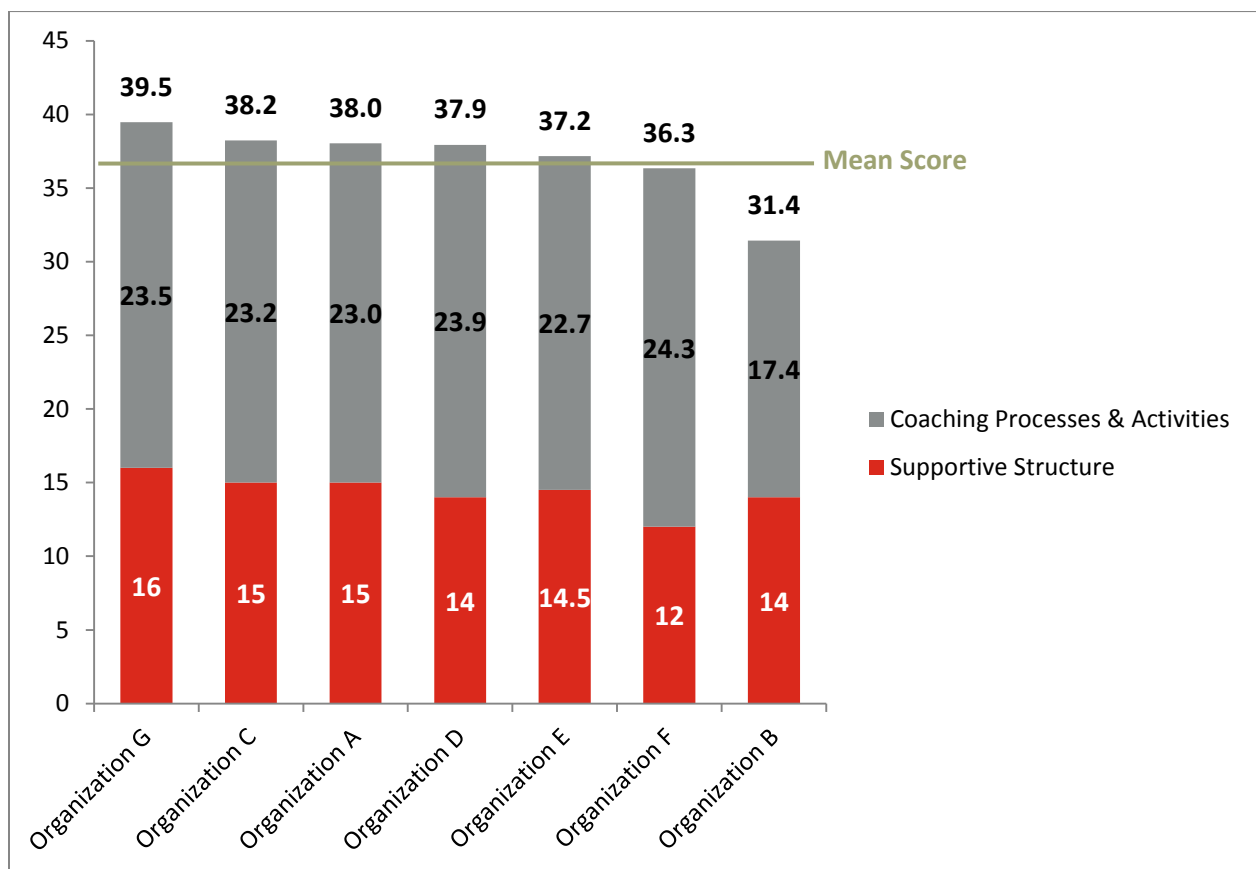
7.2.1 Overall Index Scores

Exhibit 7.2 below presents the total possible scores for the index and each construct, mean total, and mean construct scores for and for each nonprofit organization the SBC program as a whole.

The total scores ranged from 31.4 to 39.5 across nonprofit organizations, and the mean was 36.9. Five of seven organizations had a total index score above the mean. The Supportive Structures construct had a total possible score of 18, and scores for the organizations ranged from 12 to 16. The SBC mean for Supportive Structures was 14.4; four organizations scored above the mean. Coaching Processes and Activities scores ranged from 17.4 to 23.3; the total possible score was 27, and the SBC mean was 22.6. Only one organization scored below the SBC mean.

None of the nonprofit organizations achieved the highest possible score on either construct. Scores within Supportive Structures were split above and below the mean, suggesting that there are areas of strength as well as areas where organizations may need additional support and guidance. The majority of organizations scored above the mean on Coaching Processes and Activities; one organization stands out as well below the others (17.4). The following section examines individual component and their indicator scores to help unpack these summary scores and findings (see Appendix F for a complete table of index, construct, component, and indicator scores by organization).

Exhibit 7.2 Index Scores by Construct and Nonprofit Organization



Source: Director Interview, Coach Interviews, Student Survey, Salesforce

7.2.2 Supportive Structures

The mean scores for the two components that comprise the Supportive Structures were very similar at 7.1 (*Coaching Organization*) and 7.2 (*Coaching in Place*).

Component 1: Coaching Organization

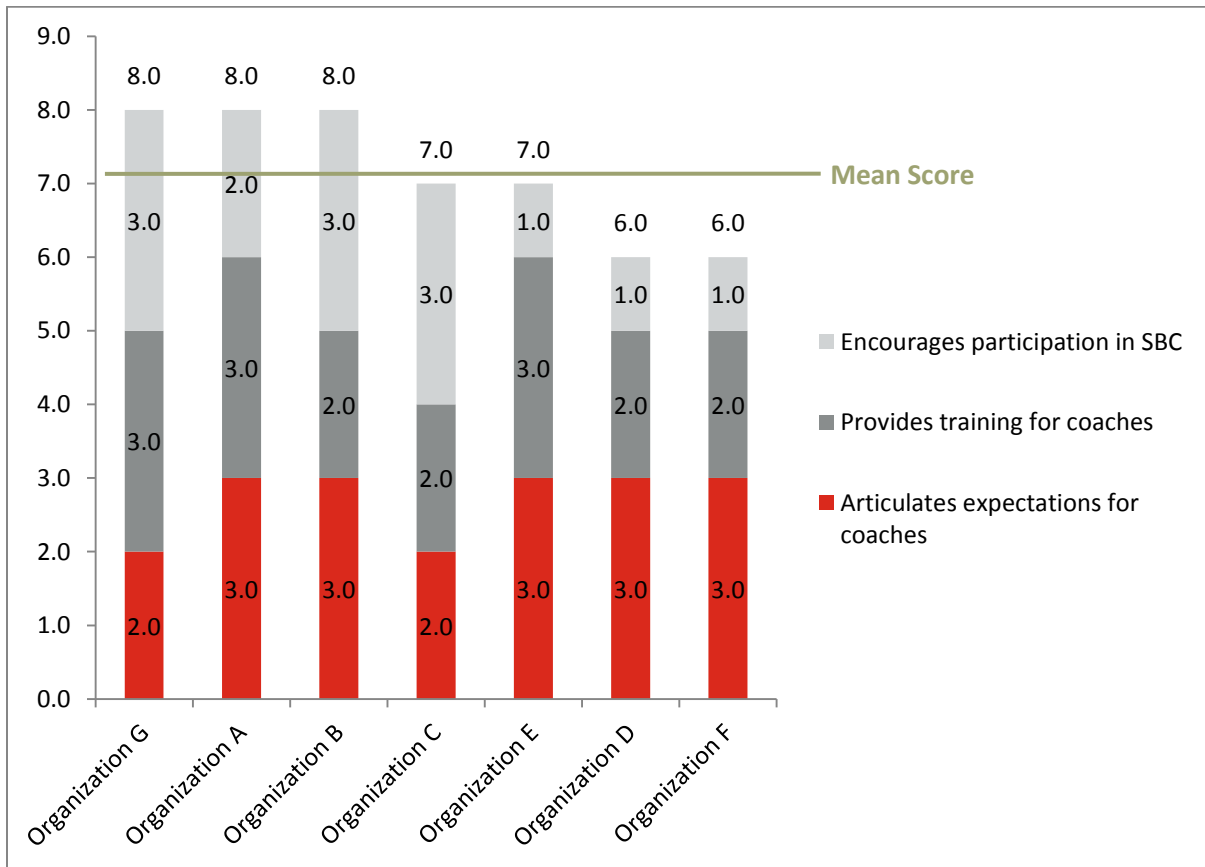
A high level of implementation on this component reflects a nonprofit organization's commitment to hiring well-qualified coaches, providing them with training specific to transition coaching, and encouraging all coaches to participate in SBC meetings. Moderate implementation includes at least *some* endorsement of each of the indicators by a coaching organization. Finally, low implementation reflects organizations that do not provide these structures and resources, or provide only minimal inputs, for their coaches.

As Exhibit 7.3 shows, organizations' total scores vary both on this component and across its constituent indicators.

- In terms of total component scores, three organizations demonstrate high levels of implementation with component scores of 8 each, and the other four organizations demonstrate a moderate level of implementation (scores of 6 and 7).
- Five organizations score high on *articulates expectations for coaches* indicator, which had the highest mean (2.7). Three organizations score high on the *provides training to coaches* indicator and four score at the moderate level (mean 2.4). *Encourages participation in SBC* is the indicator on which there is room for growth, particularly from the three organizations with low scores on this indicator (mean 2).
- Further, there is variation within organizations such that all organizations had at least two different levels across the three *Coaching Organization* indicators. Exhibit 7.3 shows Organizations D and F had the most within-organization variation, with different scores on each of the three indicators.

In general, based on data from 2014-15, the nonprofit organizations are fully or already implementing two of the three indicators of this component: *articulates expectations for coaches* and *provides training to coaches*. Organizations clearly selected highly qualified coaches and provided them training, and three organizations focused training on transition coaching. *Encourages participation in SBC* program measures the extent to which coaches were encouraged to attend and participate in SBC program level activities, and this appears to be an area with high potential for growth for some organizations.

Exhibit 7.3 Index Scores for Component 1: Coaching Organization



Source: Director Interviews, Coach Interviews, Nonprofit organization documents.

Component 2: Coaching in Place

High implementation on the *Coaching in Place* indicator includes student reports of suitable meeting spots on campus and coaches with access to academic data and information as well as coaches having regular interactions with college staff about transition coaching. Moderate implementation reflects coaching that is somewhat, albeit not fully integrated into the college space, creating challenges for both coaches and students. Low implementation reflects coaching that is not integrated in the college space—meeting spots are not suitable, and coaches lack access to student information and access to college staff and resources.

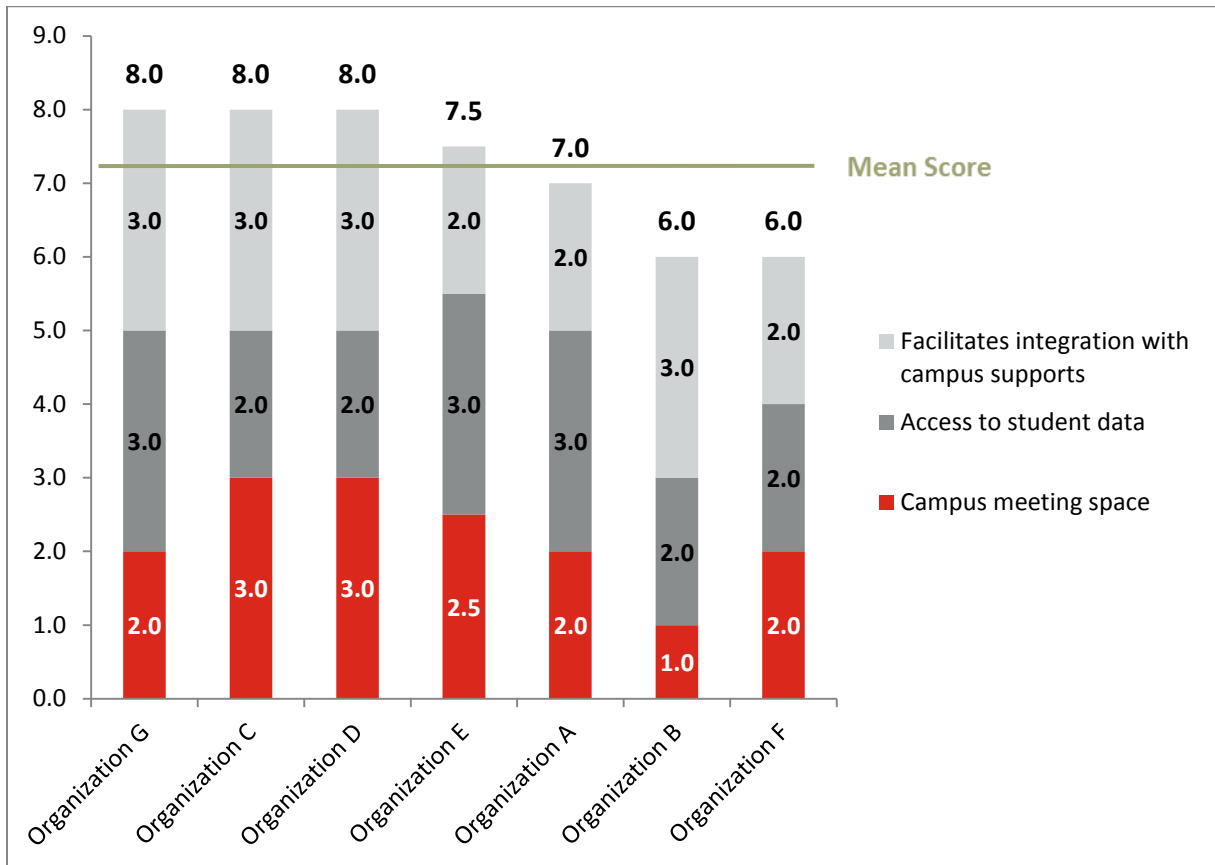
Again, there is variation in total scores and within organizations, although less variation across the indicators (see Exhibit 7.4).

- Similar to the *Coaching Organization* component, total scores on this component range from 6 to 8, with three organizations score an 8, indicating implementation at a high level, and four organizations are implementing at a moderate level.
- Four organizations score high on the *facilitates integration with campus support* indicator, which has the highest mean (2.6), three organizations score high on the *access to student data* (mean 2.4), and two organizations score high on *campus meeting space* (mean 2.2). There is opportunity for all organizations to improve on at least one indicator within this component.

- Six of the seven organizations (Organization B is the exception) score at least at the moderate level across all three *Coaching in Place* indicators.

These scores suggest that coaches are doing relatively well on implementing SBC on college campuses; however, coaches could potentially benefit from support related to locating meeting space.

Exhibit 7.4 Index Scores for Component 2: Coaching in Place



Source: SBC Student Survey, Coach Interviews

7.2.3 Coaching Processes and Activities

More variation and higher scores are observed among the components that comprise the Coaching Processes and Activities construct than in the Support Structures construct. The mean scores for the three components of the Coaching Processes and Activities are 7.9 (*Ongoing Engagement*), 7.7 (*Student-Coach Connection*), and 6.9 (*Transition Activities*).

Component 3: Ongoing Engagement

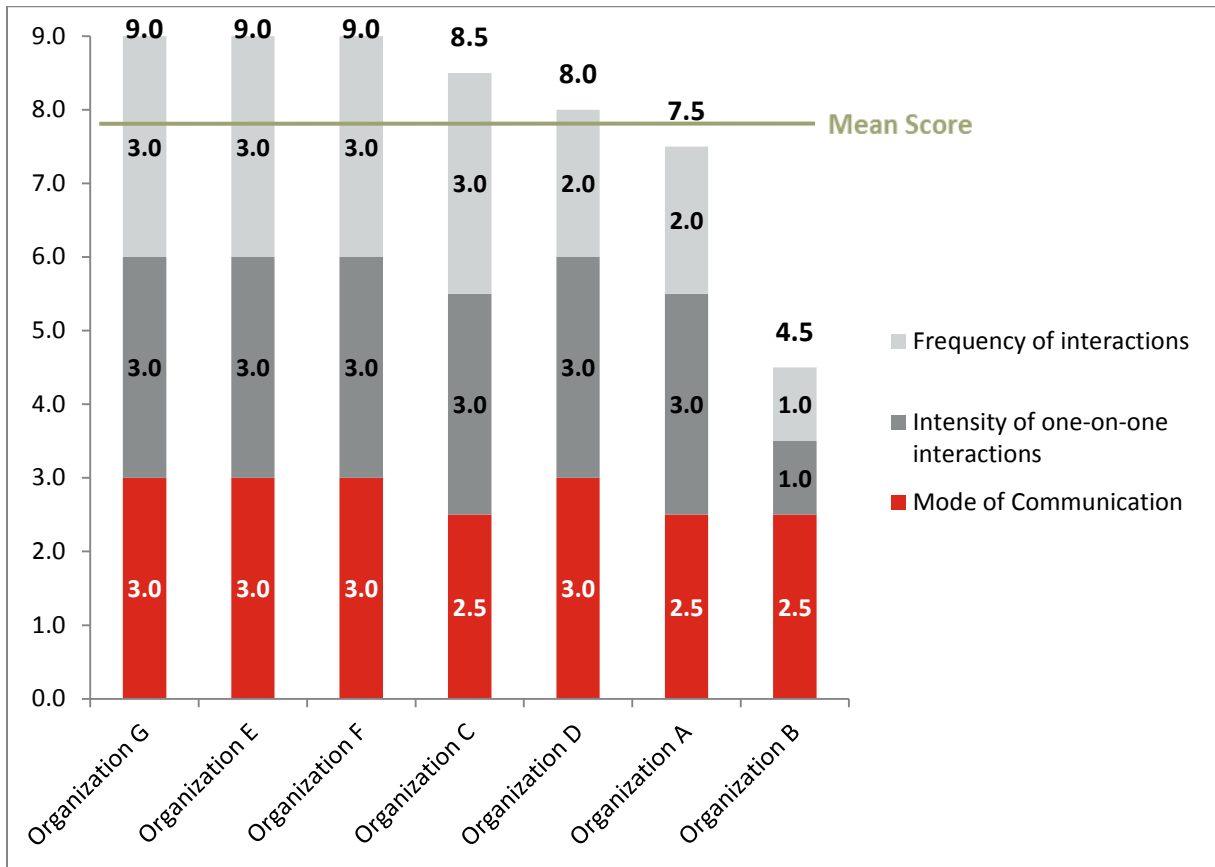
High levels of implementation require coaches to reach out to students via multiple modes of communication and maintain regular, targeted, and sustained engagement with students. Moderate implementation reflects an organization with fewer reported interactions with students and fewer modes of communication. Low implementation indicates coaches use only one or two modes of communication and are meeting with students inconsistently.

Exhibit 7.5 shows that there was substantial consistency within organizations and across the indicators of this component, although one organization’s low scores, in turn, create a wider range for total scores.

- This component has both the highest (9) and lowest (4.5) organization-specific scores across all five index components.
- Six of the organizations score high on the *intensity of one-on-one* indicator, suggesting that they have consistent and sustained interactions with students across the school year.
- Three organizations are fully implementing this component, with the highest total score possible (9). These organizations use a variety of methods to reach out to and stay in contact with students and their one-on-one interactions occur regularly throughout the school year.

Organization B scores low on this component (4.5), indicating that interactions with students (in-person as well as through other modes) are infrequent and inconsistent across the school year.

Exhibit 7.5 Index Scores for Component 3: Ongoing Engagement



Source: SBC Student Survey, Coach Interviews, Salesforce

Component 4: Student-Coach Connection

High implementation reflects students’ positive perceptions of coaching, considerable continuity of coaching and substantial efforts to re-engage students no longer enrolled in college. Moderate implementation reflects less active efforts to re-engage students, more turnover of coaches, and fewer

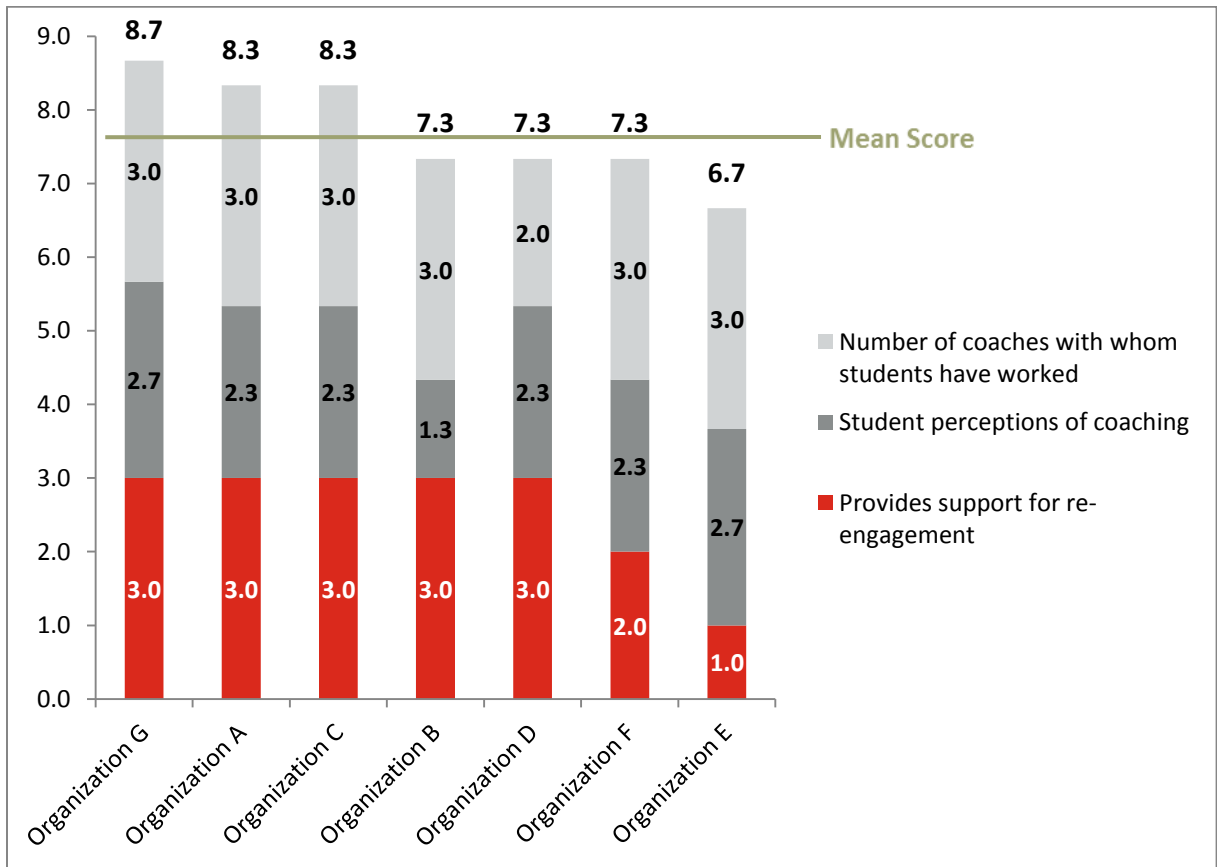
students reporting positive perceptions of coaching. Low implementation indicates the following: less than 60 percent of students are positive in their opinions of coaching; there is high coach turnover; and coaches seemingly do not attempt to re-engage students no longer enrolled in college.

As Exhibit 7.6 shows, there was variation within the organizations, some variation across organizations' total scores on this component and more consistency across the indicators that constituted this component (with the exception of the *provides support for re-engagement* indicator).

- In terms of total component scores, three organizations demonstrate high levels of implementation, with component scores above 8 each, and the other four organizations implement this component at a moderate level (scores between 6.5 and 7.5).
- Four organizations score high on two of the indicators, *provides support for re-engagement* (mean 2.6) and *number of coaches with whom students worked* (mean 2.9). Organizations' scores on the third indicator, *student perceptions of coaching* are all moderate to low (mean 2.3).
- The primary variation in this component occurs within organizations, such that two organizations have both high and low indicator scores. Interestingly, the low scores span two indicators, *provides support for re-engagement* (Organization E) and *student perceptions of coaching* (Organization B).

Overall, organizations score high (three organizations) and moderate (four organizations) in their implementation of this component. There are slight differences between organizations in how they provided support for re-engagement; two organizations provided fewer supports, and five organizations reported continuing to engage those students no longer enrolled in school.

Exhibit 7.6 Index Scores for Component 4: Student-Coach Connection



Source: SBC Student Survey, Coach Interviews

Component 5: Transition Activities

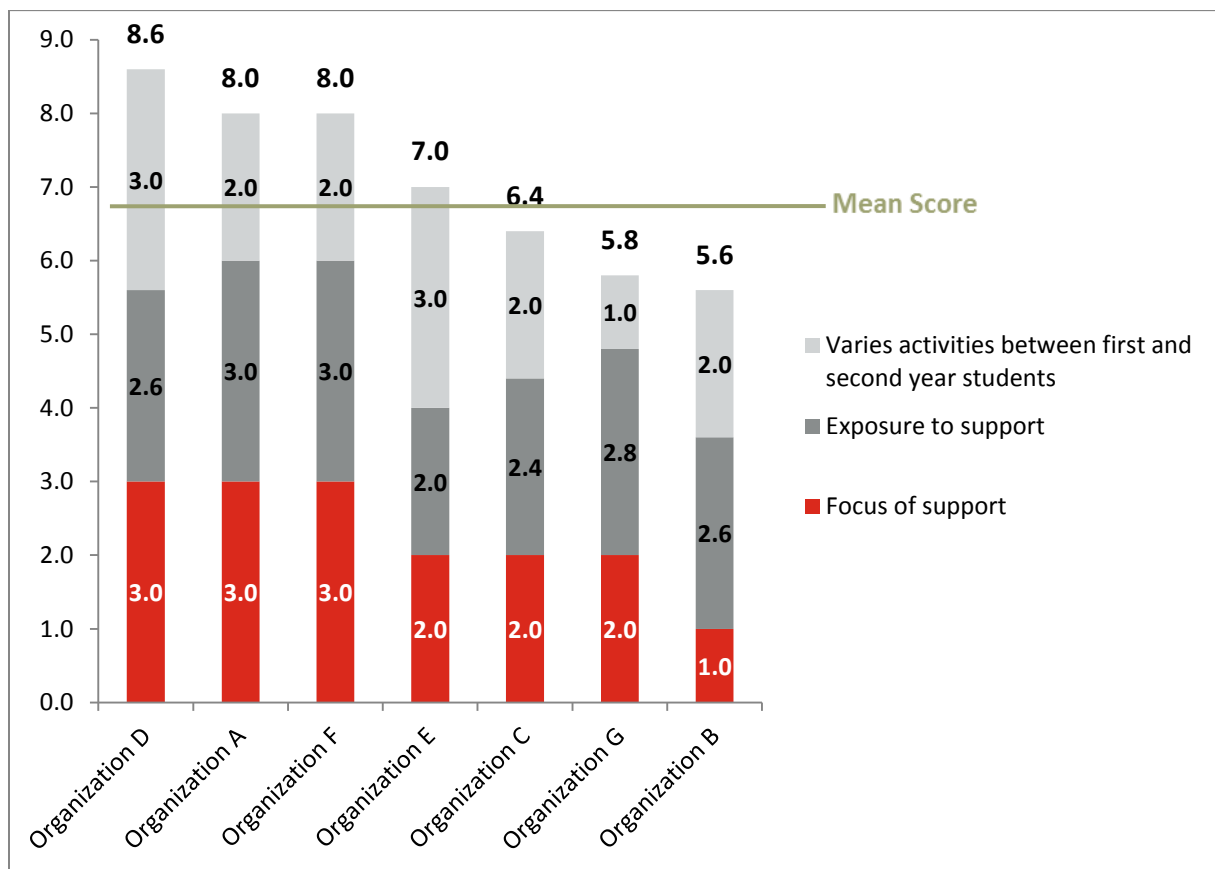
High implementation reflects transition support activities to all students, across all transition topics, and with demonstrated frequency; it also reflects coaches’ differentiated supports for first and second year college students. Moderate levels of implementation indicate that most students receive support across some, not all topics, and some variation in types of support offered to first and second year students. Low implementation reflects support activities that reach few students, are infrequent, and do not vary (for first and second year students).

Exhibit 7.7 shows that a fair amount of variation across organizations, yet more consistency within organizations, and variation across two of the three indicators that made up this component.

- Total scores across organizations range from high (8.6) to low (5.6) implementation of this component, and two organizations share the same total score (Organizations A and F).
- Scores on two of the indicators, *focus of support* (mean 2.3) and *varies activities between first and second year students* (mean 2.1), vary substantially across organizations, with scores at all three levels whereas scores are more stable on the *exposure to support* (mean 2.6) indicator across the organizations.
- Within organizations, scores tend to be clustered either on the moderate-high end or the moderate-low end.

Nonprofit organizations show differences in implementation on the indicators of this component. Three of the organizations demonstrate high implementation, suggesting that they consistently provided students support across the range of topics, and these organizations also differentiate the support provided to first and second year students.

Exhibit 7.7 Index Scores for Component 5: Transition Activities



Source: SBC Student Survey, Salesforce, Coach Interviews

7.3 Learning Points

The implementation index integrated data from multiple sources—director interviews, coach interviews, student surveys, and Salesforce—to create a measure that described implementation of SBC. The index identifies specific areas in which all or most of the nonprofit coaching organizations consistently implemented SBC and areas in which organizations’ implementation varied.

Two indicators had particularly **high average scores**, suggesting that all organizations were implementing them to a high level:

- *Mode of communication* (mean 2.8) and
- *Number of coaches with whom students have worked* (mean 2.9).

Using varied communication modes allows coaches to “meet students where they are” increasing the chances that coaches will connect with students on an ongoing basis. Further, having one or two

coaches throughout their participation in SBC makes it easier for students to establish and maintain a trusting coach-student relationship. The mean scores on these indicators point to areas of strength in SBC transition coaching. With the exception of Organization B, the nonprofit organizations appeared to consistently engage students both in-person and through other modes of contact. Continuing, and where necessary expanding, these varied outreach practices is likely to enhance to coach-student relationships. Further, nonprofit organizations can be encouraged to maintain, to the best of their capabilities, stability in coach staffing to foster strong, trusting relationships with students.

On the other end of the spectrum, the three indicators with the **lowest average scores** suggest moderate implementation in these areas across the organizations, and present opportunities for further development:

- *Encourages participation with SBC* (mean 2.0)
- *Varies activities between first and second year students* (mean 2.1)
- *Campus meeting space* (mean 2.2)

Participation in program-wide SBC events and locating appropriate meeting space on campuses both emerged as challenges. As noted earlier, these are areas where the Boston Foundation, the nonprofit organizations, and partner colleges and universities may be able to work together to provide more structured opportunities for coaches to come together and share experiences and best practices.

The index also highlights an important facet of coaching: while in general, coaches *offer* to address the full range of likely topics in their interactions with students, that any individual student may not receive support on all topics, which suggests that coaches tailored their support services to individual student needs. However, coaches did not necessarily base their tailoring on students' academic progress. As caseloads expand, coaches might be encouraged to purposefully tailor their supports and outreach based on students' academic progress, while still maintaining further individualization on a case-by-case basis.

The index will play a critical role in future reports. Key features of implementation measured through the index will be updated, when feasible, to track ongoing program implementation and these features will be linked to student outcomes. Moving forward the index provides a framework to monitor essential aspects of implementation and quantifiable measures to examine which implementation features are related to student outcomes. As such the index will continuously add to our collective understanding of best practices in transition coaching.

8. Discussion

Since the launch of the Success Boston initiative in 2009, the overall college graduation rates for BPS high school students has consistently improved. However, a steeper upward trend is necessary – both to meet the initiative’s goal of a 70 percent college graduation rate for the BPS Class of 2011 and to meet the predicted demand for a primarily college-educated workforce by 2020. One critical component of the initiative with documented potential for boosting college graduation rates is transition coaching.

This report summarizes the transition supports and resources SBC provides to students, describes how students use these supports and resources, and identifies areas for improvement, based upon a thorough investigation of SBC during the 2014-2015 school year. The implementation portion of the study has identified student characteristics and coaching activities that may potentially influence student outcomes to be measured in the impact portion of the study. In the sections below, we connect the key implementation findings to outcomes, and discuss implications for SBC practices moving forward.

The students participating in SBC are from groups typically underrepresented in postsecondary education, and the diversity of the SBC student population represents an impressive accomplishment in its own right. The SBC students are also highly motivated to attain postsecondary and advanced degrees. The majority of SBC students—both at four-year and two-year colleges—expect to earn at least a bachelor’s degree; 46 percent of students expect to attain a bachelor’s degree and 33 percent expect to attain a graduate degree. Indeed, the majority of students enrolled at two-year colleges expect to complete at least a bachelor’s (65 percent), which indicates that many SBC students at two-year colleges expect to transfer from their current institution to a four-year college, or after completing their associate’s degree, eventually to enroll in a four-year institution. The majority of coaches (12 of 19 interviewed) reported they had worked with community college students specifically on aspects of the transfer process. Given that a sizable portion of SBC students would like to transfer to four-year institutions, the SBC program as a whole—and the coaches who help operationalize program-wide goals—may have an opportunity to focus services and supports specifically on the transfer process, and thereby ultimately improve students’ chances of success. Transferring to a four-year institution and degree completion are among the outcomes that the study will examine in the future.

SBC coaches engage in providing other supports that research suggests can improve student outcomes. Connecting students to resources, helping them plan their coursework and identify a major, and developing a positive relationship with students have all been identified as mechanisms by which supports may improve outcomes for community college students in particular. Many SBC coaches reported that connecting students to resources on and off campus is an important component of transition coaching. Coaches can certainly take advantage of information colleges have provided about on-campus student support services; however, most coaches indicated they must obtain identify resources and services for their students independent of the colleges. As the program expands, nonprofit organizations and TBF may want to coordinate more explicitly with colleges to ensure that returning and new coaches have ready access to information about the support services each campus makes available to students; it may also be helpful for colleges to offer coaches the opportunities to attend trainings and professional development about support services that colleges routinely provide

to in-house support services personnel. These strategies may improve coaches' ability to connect students to the right resources more effectively.

Another area that might benefit from purposeful attention program-wide is college-work-life balance for students. Two-thirds of SBC students reported that they work an average of 10 hours a week, and some work even more. Not surprisingly, substantially more two-year college students reported that they work 20-plus hours per week than did four-year college students. Students indicated that balancing academics and work was challenging; three-quarters of students reported that their life/work responsibilities interfered with school two or more times per semester. The supports coaches provide to students about time management and financial aid could help students balance their responsibilities; another avenue that may be worth exploring is whether students' financial aid could be increased, which might alleviate the pressure to work additional hours while enrolled in college.

Continued support in obtaining financial aid has been linked with college persistence and graduation (Castleman and Page, 2014; Bird and Castleman, 2014; Public Agenda, 2009). The coaches universally reported that they supported students dealing with financial aid forms and FAFSA completion, and 75 percent of students reported that financial aid counseling and FAFSA completion was the *most* helpful coaching support received. Given that financial aid completion is an outcome of interest, nonprofit organizations and the Boston Foundation may want to continue to encourage coaches to provide support about financial aid in general, and may potentially consider providing additional professional development and training on how best to support students as they navigate financial aid and FAFSA applications. As the program expands, this may be especially important when training new coaches.

About half of participating students indicated they had been recruited to join SBC during their senior year in high school. Some students were therefore invited to participate in various summer programming through the nonprofit organizations, including assisting students in completing and submitting college application materials and financial aid applications. Provision of summer support may be pivotal in increasing the likelihood of enrollment for SBC students. Evidence collected thus far indicates that some summer programming occurs, although information is neither consistently captured at the program level nor well documented in Salesforce records.

Once the school year began, coaches and students communicated with one another through a variety of methods; generally, coaches relied upon the modes students most preferred. The SBC program, as a whole, was providing support services on those topics aligned with prior research findings about the specific factors linked with college persistence and graduation, including financial aid support, course selection, time management, connecting students to resources, setting goals and selecting a course of study. Importantly, students concurred that their coaches were most helpful when providing support about these same topics.

The coaches described two other important components of their work with students, including helping students learn to advocate for themselves and develop the confidence to succeed as important,

“Success Boston coaching has been amazing and I truly value this program. It has made the transition from high school to college so smooth that I barely had difficulty getting through things and being connected to needed resources. I appreciate this program's support a lot...With Success Boston, I never once felt alone...”

—SBC Student

through encouraging students to meet with professors to discuss course requirements, seek out support services, identify and apply for internships. One coach commented: “*Seeing my students do things on their own, advocating for themselves...I love having them going in and doing what they need to be doing without me having to tell them anything.*”

Prior research also suggests that the *amount* of communication and contact coaches have with students may contribute to improved college-related outcomes (Castleman, Page, and Schooley, 2014). SBC coaches and students communicate frequently, as evidenced by the 8,685 transition support interactions logged into Salesforce for the 2014-2015 school year. The number of interactions recorded for the 2014-2015 school year sounds quite large, yet the data suggest inconsistencies in nonprofit organizations’ expectations about how often coaches should engage with students each semester. To ensure that all students receive a consistent threshold of coaching support, perhaps stakeholders could consider whether to establish a minimum number of interactions coaches should have with their students each semester.

The findings described above illustrate how the SBC program has continued to support college-entering students navigate their first years in college, and also point to connections between aspects of program implementation and subsequent outcomes that will be examined once the study has obtained detailed information about key student outcomes. The findings also suggest that the nonprofit organizations have faced some challenges, especially in terms of managing large and sometimes widely dispersed caseloads of students. Specifically, coaches who reported having 60 or more students lamented that they could not spend an adequate amount of time with individual students, and coaches whose caseloads were distributed across multiple campuses faced with the organizational challenge of managing multiple college calendars, and the logistical challenge of spending valuable time traveling between campuses. In all three cases, these challenges hindered coaches’ capacity to support students effectively. As SBC triples the number of students served, helping coaches and organizations manage these hurdles will clearly be important.

Key Recommendations:

- ❖ Encourage coaches to continue to current practices of reaching students through multiple modes, and tailoring their support and outreach according to students' needs and academic progress.
- ❖ Convene SBC program-wide meetings to improve information dissemination and enhance program cohesiveness.
- ❖ Schedule a campus-specific orientation session for SBC coaches at least once each year, and potentially once each semester, to introduce nonprofit coaches to key campus support staff and other SBC coaches on campus.
- ❖ Work with colleges to designate space for coaches to meet with students on campus, whether the spaces are private meeting rooms or public spaces.
- ❖ Expand the training and professional development opportunities provided by the Boston Foundation and nonprofit organizations to create and maintain common standards of practice. Initial topics could include training about how to support students with emotional needs and/or mental health issues, transferring from two- to four-year colleges, and managing life-work balance.
- ❖ Consider expanding summer programming across all nonprofit organizations, and at a minimum, provide training and supports for nonprofit organizations to record participation in summer activities systematically.
- ❖ Establish a minimum required number of coach-student interactions per semester to increase the consistency of coaching across the program.
- ❖ Support nonprofit organizations to maintain, to the best of their capabilities, stability in coaches, thereby helping to foster strong, trusting, and enduring relationships with students.

The findings reported here document the supportive structures already in place at nonprofit organizations, the partner colleges, and the Boston Foundation. These structures represent the essential elements of transition coaching. The report describes the what, when, how, and where coaching occurs, as well as coach and student perceptions about coaching, including identification of potential areas for improvement. As such, this report creates a comprehensive picture of SBC during the 2014-2015 school year. This report does not yet describe the implications of these coaching activities for student outcomes—that will occur in the interim report (scheduled for 2017), once the team has obtained and analyzed data on short-term student outcomes such as persistence, GPA, and FAFSA completion. The interim report will also link key features of implementation, measured through the index, to short-term outcomes. In the meantime, the findings and recommendations presented here may inform ongoing improvements for transition coaching in Boston.

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Appendix A: Coaching Administration Interview Protocol

SBC model

- Please describe the [name of coaching org] coaching model.
 - What are the goals of your organization’s Success Boston coaching?
 - What specific coaching services does your organization provide?
 - Who are the intended recipients?
 - Which features of coaching do you think are most important for student outcomes?
 - Probe for which features are helpful for different outcomes?
 - Can you briefly explain any the other college access programs run through [name of coaching org]?
 - What are the unique features SBC?
 - [If organization does other coaching,]What distinguishes coaching from other coaching support?

Coaches

- How are coaches identified and hired? (and by who, how often)
- What are the specific characteristics/qualifications you look for in coaches?
- How are coaches trained? (by whom)
 - What types of supports and/or resources are provided to coaches?
- How and when are participants matched with coaches?
- What are the specific features or activities that help you to define quality coaching?
- How do you communicate your vision of quality to your coaches?
- How are coaches supervised?

Target population

- How are students identified for the coaching program?
 - What are the mechanisms (e.g., are they referred by their schools? Do they self-select? Other ways?)
- In general, what are the challenges your target students face as they make post-secondary plans?
 - What are the three-four most important strategies your organization uses to address these challenges?
- Do coaches work with other students who are not eligible for Success Boston coaching? If so, how do coaches monitor services for different types of students? Are you able to identify those students?
- Which specific schools from BPS does your organization focus on/ or work in exclusively?

Challenges to SBC implementation

- Describe any specific challenges your organization has faced in its implementation of the SB coaching (i.e., retention, financial constraints)
- What kinds of challenges have your program staff encountered (students, parents, IHEs, high schools) to the coaching program?

- How often do your coaches enter data into Salesforce? Does [name of coaching org] have its own database to track students and coaching interactions? [If yes,] Are there elements that you track that are included in Salesforce or vice versa?

Partnerships

- Please describe the nature of your partnership with the Success Boston coaching initiative.
 - Describe specific activities related to your work with SBC.
 - What types of supports do you receive from SB (i.e., trainings)?
- Describe partnerships (if any?) with other coaching organizations working with SB
- Describe partnerships with IHEs (UMass, 4 year and 2 year institutions)
 - Describe your general relationship with the IHE(s), which IHEs do you work with on SBC?
 - Describe any supports you received from the IHEs your students attend.
 - What roles do the IHEs play in the implementation of the coaching program?
 - To what extent are IHEs involved in matching students and coaches?

Appendix B: Coach Interview Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview about your coaching experiences with the Success Boston Coaching program. The Boston Foundation (TBF) has contracted with Abt Associates to conduct an evaluation of the Success Boston Coaching program, which aims to reduce barriers to college success for Boston Public School graduates, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a coach in the Success Boston Coaching program, you can provide important information about how Success Boston Coaching is implemented.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and your decision to participate will not in any way affect your employment or your relationship with your coaching organization. All information during this interview will remain confidential.

During our meeting today, we will take notes and with your permission; we'd also like to audiotape the conversation so that we can listen at a later time for points we might miss during the conversation. Is it ok if we audiotape today's conversation?

- IF YES: Ok, great thanks.
- IF NO: Ok, we will not record today's conversation.

Also, I wanted to let you know that the information you share with us today may be included in one or more of the reports we produce as part of our evaluation, however, you will not be identified as the provider of this information. If you decide some part of our discussion should remain confidential and should not be included in any reports we produce, please just let us know, and we will make sure not to include this sensitive information. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the extent allowed by law.

Only members of our evaluation team at Abt Associates will have access to the information you share. All hardcopies of notes and the audio recording will be converted to electronic files and stored on password-protected computer drives, and the paper files and recording will be destroyed as soon as they are converted to electronic files.

The risks associated with participating in the interview are very small. You will not be required to respond to any question and may choose to not respond to any question without penalty.

Also, you are free at any time to stop the interview, without affecting your relationship with the Boston Foundation, your coaching organization, or Abt Associates in any way.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Great, are you ready to begin the interview?

- IF YES: PROCEED WITH INTERVIEW
- IF NO: Ok, thank you for your time today.

Background & Coaching Organization

- What is your highest educational degree?
 - What was your major/concentration in [highest level of education]?
- How long have you been a coach at your organization?
- Is this job full-time?

- IF PART-TIME: How many hours per week do you work as a Success Boston coach?
- Have you coached or held similar positions at other organizations? If yes, which one(s)?*

Initial Student Engagement

- Describe how your organization engages students in the SB coaching program.
 - How are students selected for (recruited into) your coaching program/SB program? Probe for specific selection requirements (i.e. GPA, income, first generation college, neighborhood, college attending/applied to, citizenship, etc.) vs. more general targeted student characteristics.
 - How and when do students typically first learn they will be part of your coaching program/the SB program?
 - What kinds of information do you collect from students during intake and enrollment? How is that information collected (e.g., on paper or electronic forms, completed by students, by coaches?) Can we get copies of those documents? Probe: Is there an application? Are there students who apply and are not eligible?
 - When do students initially start working with a coach in your organization?
 - Please describe the coaching activities you do with Success Boston students while they are still in high school. Probe about any activities related to helping students select and/or apply for college; get specifics.
 - About how many students who are selected for (or recruited for) SB coaching do not ever actually receive coaching?
 - How are caseloads determined (both in terms of the number of students and which students)? What is your current caseload? Are all of those SB students?
- How common is it for students to work with multiple coaches?

Coaching Activities

- In general, how often do you meet with your students?
 - How long are meetings, generally, and how frequently do those meetings occur? Does frequency vary depending on time of year?
 - Where do you and your students usually meet when you meet in person?
- What topics are addressed, and which activities do coaches carry out with students?
 - What is the most common way you communicate with students? (email, text, face-to-face, etc.) How does this vary depending on the subject matter (topic of communication)? Depending on the time of year?
 - What are the most commonly discussed topics with the students for whom you are a coach or the students served by coaches from your organization? How does this change over the course of the academic year? [Probe for details – if coaches mention broad topics - academic support – ask for details, for what specific things they do/discuss with students]
 - This is the list of coaching topics that are included in Salesforce, you can probe across these topics if coaches are too vague –
 - Academic
 - Personal & Emotional
 - Financial
 - Career and Future Plans
 - College Admission

- Describe how your coaching activities and topics of communication differ for first year (freshman) and second year (sophomore) students?
- Which topics do you wish you had more time and/or resources to work on with students?
- Describe your engagement with parents during the coaching process

Ongoing Student Engagement

- How long do you typically stay connected to your students?
- Please describe whether and how students' commitment to the coaching process changes over time.
- Please describe whether and how you interact with students who drop out of school during their first or second year?

Relationship with IHEs

- With which colleges are you currently working (are your students currently attending)?
- Please describe your relationship(s) with IHEs your students are attending.
 - Where do you meet with students on campus?
 - How do you get access to information about student progress?
 - Probe for interactions with IHE staff, access to data (student records/progress information)
- Please describe any IHE-sponsored trainings you've attended. What topics were covered; what aspects did you find the most helpful?

Partnership with Success Boston Coaching program

- Please describe the process in place for entering data into Salesforce. [Note: we want to understand whether they have a system in place to get the data entered. This may come up in other parts of the interview.]
- Please describe the meetings you participate in as part of SBC. Which of these meetings are required, either by your organization or by tBF?
 - In which other SBC functions do you participate?
- How does the partnership with SBC affect your coaching?

Accomplishments

- Describe some of your accomplishments as a coach with the SB coaching program.
- (Probe for: student successes, improved partnerships with IHEs, relationship with other coaching orgs)

Challenges

- What are the greatest challenges you face as a coach to students?
- What do you think are the biggest barriers to student success?
 - Which specific strategies do you/does your organization use to help students overcome those barriers?
- What advice would you offer someone who is just starting as a coach?

If coaches ask what we will do with the data or will we share reports with them/their organization:

- *Abt will prepare a full report for the Boston Foundation. The Boston Foundation will most likely post a report to their website. We also anticipate that there will be briefings for all the SB partners.*

Appendix C: Student Survey

Introduction

Abt Associates is conducting a study about the Success Boston Coaching program on behalf of Success Boston. Part of the study includes learning directly from students about your experiences; if you worked with a coach or mentor from *American Student Assistance (ASA)*, *Boston Private Industry Council (PIC)*, *Bottom Line*, *Freedom House*, *Hyde Square Task Force*, *Sociedad Latina*, *UMass Boston*, or *West End House* during your first year at college, then you are part of the Success Boston coaching program.

The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete.

You do not have to complete this survey. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to answer a question or to stop the survey at any point. You can participate in the Success Boston coaching even if you do not complete the survey.

Your responses could help to improve Success Boston coaching. Protecting your privacy is very important to us. Your name will not be included in any reports or data produced by the study.

We know your time is valuable. To thank you for your time participating, we will send you a \$10 gift card after you complete this survey.

Are you willing to take this survey?

- Yes
- No

IF NO:

- Thank you for your time!

Section 1: Participation In Success Boston Coaching

To begin, we would like to learn about how you connect with your Success Boston coach and the types of support he/she has provided to you.

1. When did you graduate from a Boston public high school (BPS)?
 - 2014
 - 2013
 - Other, please indicate: _____
2. This is a list of the organizations that are part of the Success Boston Coaching initiative. Do you currently work with a coach in any of the following programs?
 - American Student Assistance (ASA)/TERI
 - Boston Private Industry Council
 - Bottom Line
 - Freedom House
 - Hyde Square Task Force
 - WestEnd House
 - UMass Boston
 - Sociedad Latina
 - uAspire
 - I don't know

3. How many Success Boston coaches have you had since you graduated high school?
- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - More than 4
4. How did you first hear about Success Boston? *(Please check all that apply)*
- I learned about Success Boston from my college/university
 - Someone from a Success Boston coaching organization came to my high school
 - My high school guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member referred me to Success Boston
 - A friend from my high school suggested that I learn more
 - A friend from my college suggested that I learn more
 - Someone I know from my neighborhood suggested that I learn more
 - I found out about Success Boston online
 - I heard about Success Boston during an after-school or summer program
 - I learned about the Success Boston coaching program directly from a coach
 - Other, please explain: _____
 - I don't recall exactly
5. When did you first start working with a Success Boston coach?
- Junior year of high school or before
 - Senior year of high school
 - Summer before starting college
 - Fall of first semester in college
 - After first semester of college
 - I don't recall exactly

Now, we would like to know more about your interactions with your current Success Boston coach.

6. In general, how often does your current coach usually get in touch with you in the following ways? (For each row, please indicate about how often)

	Never	Once per semester	Once per month	Once per week	Multiple times per week
My coach reaches out to me through text messaging.					
My coach reaches out to me through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other social media.					
My coach reaches out to me by email.					
My coach reaches out to me by phone call.					
My coach finds me on campus.					

7. In general, how often do you get in touch with your current coach in the following ways when you want to reach out? (For each row, please indicate about how often)

	Never	Once per semester	Once per month	Once per week	Multiple times per week
I contact my coach through text messaging.					
I contact my coach through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other social media.					
I contact my coach by email.					
I contact my coach over the phone.					
I find my coach on campus.					

8. How do you prefer to get in touch with your current coach?

- By text message
- Through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other social media
- By email
- Over the phone
- Meeting in person
- Other _____

9. During this past semester (fall 2014), when did you communicate most frequently with your Success Boston coach?

- During class registration, in the summer
- At the beginning of classes
- When payments for my classes were due
- Before/during midterm exams
- At the end of the semester
- I have regular contact with my coach throughout the semester
- It changes depending on what is going on in my life
- It changes depending on what is happening at my college
- Other, please specify: _____

Section 2: Coaching Activities

Now, we would like to learn about the specific topics and types of activities you engaged in with your Success Boston coach.

1. What did your coach help you with in your first year of college? (For each topic, please indicate about how often that happened)

	Never	Once per semester	Once per month	Once per week	Multiple times per week	Not applicable
Academic preparation & tutoring						
Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion						
Registering for classes & course selection						
Exploring majors & academic pathways						
Time management & study skills						
Connecting to other campus resources						
Helping my family understand and support why I am in college						
Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus						
Career counseling, job planning, or job preparation						
Understanding transfer process to four-year institution						
Managing life responsibilities (home, family, work)						

2. What did your coach help you with **this** year (2014 – 2015)?
(For each topic, please check indicate about how often that happened)

[Program: If Q1 = 2013. If Q2 = 2014, skip to Q11.]

	Never	Once per semester	Once per month	Once per week	Multiple times per week	Not applicable
Academic preparation & tutoring						
Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion						
Registering for classes & course selection						
Exploring majors & academic pathways						
Time management & study skills						
Connecting to other campus resources						
Helping my family understand and support why I am in college						
Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus						
Career counseling, job planning, or job preparation						
Understanding transfer process to four-year institution						
Managing life responsibilities (home, family, work)						

3. Thinking about this school year (2014-2015), please select the three topics you discussed in-person with your coach: *(Please check up to three only)*

[Program: Populate list if Q1 = 2013 then Q10 ≠ Never or Not Applicable & if Q1 = 2014 then Q9 ≠ Never or Not Applicable]

- Academic preparation & tutoring
- Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion
- Registering for classes & course selection
- Exploring majors & academic pathways
- Time management & study skills
- Connecting to other campus resources
- Helping my family understand and support why I am in college
- Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus
- Career counseling, job planning or job preparation
- Understanding transfer process to four-year institution
- Managing life responsibilities (home, family, work)

4. Thinking about last school year (2013-2014), please select the **three** topics you discussed most frequently *in-person* with your coach: (Please check up to three only)

[Program: If Q1 = 2013. If Q2 = 2014, skip to Q13. Populate list if Q10 ≠ Never or Not Applicable]

- Academic preparation & tutoring
- Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion
- Registering for classes & course selection
- Exploring majors & academic pathways
- Time management & study skills
- Connecting to other campus resources
- Helping my family understand and support why I am in college
- Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus
- Career counseling, job planning, or job preparation
- Understanding transfer process to four-year institution
- Managing life responsibilities (home, family, work)

5. Thinking about this school year (2014-2015), please select the three topics you discussed most frequently over text, email, or Facebook with your coach: (Please check up to three only)

[Program: Populate list if Q1 = 2013 then Q10 ≠ Never or Not Applicable & if Q1 = 2014 then Q9 ≠ Never or Not Applicable]

- Academic preparation & tutoring
- Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion
- Registering for classes & course selection
- Exploring majors & academic pathways
- Time management & study skills
- Connecting to other campus resources
- Helping my family understand and support why I am in college
- Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus
- Career counseling, job planning, or job preparation
- Understanding transfer process to four-year institution
- Managing life responsibilities (home, family, work)

6. Thinking about last year in college (2013-2014), please select the three topics you discussed most frequently over text, email, or Facebook with your coach: (please check only your top three)

[If Q1 = 2013. If Q2 = 2014, skip to Q14. Populate list if Q10 ≠ Never or Not Applicable]

- Academic preparation & tutoring
- Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion
- Registering for classes & course selection
- Exploring majors & academic pathways
- Time management & study skills
- Connecting to other campus resources
- Helping my family understand and support why I am in college
- Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus
- Career counseling, job planning, or job preparation
- Understanding transfer process to four-year institution
- Managing life responsibilities (family, home, work)

7. In general, how helpful is your current Success Boston coach at answering your questions about the following topics? *(Please check only one for each item)*

	Not helpful	Sometimes helpful, sometimes not helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	I never discussed this topic with my coach
Academic preparation & tutoring					
Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion					
Registering for classes & course selection					
Exploring majors & academic pathways					
Time management & study skills					
Connecting to other campus resources					
Helping my family understand and support why I am in college					
Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus					
Career counseling, job planning, or job preparation					
Understanding transfer process to four-year institution					
Managing life responsibilities (home, family, work)					

8. For the following topics, please indicate how much you agree with the statement about your experience working with your current Success Boston coach: *(Please check only one for each item)*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am comfortable reaching out to my coach for help with academic issues or questions.					
I am comfortable reaching out to my coach for help with financial issues or questions.					
I am comfortable reaching out to my coach for help with personal/non-academic issues or questions.					

9. For the following topics, please indicate how much you agree with the statement about your relationship with a Success Boston coach: *(Please check only one for each item)*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
In general, my coach was a helpful resource during my first year of college.					
I wish I could have had more one-on-one time with my coach.					
My coach was easy to get in touch with when I needed him/her.					
I plan to stay in touch with my coach during my next academic year.					

10. Who do you go to when you need help figuring out what to do when you have to make a decision about...*(Please check only one for each topic)*

	My Success Boston coach	Parent(s) or other family member	Friend or classmate	Faculty/ staff at my college	Another Trusted adult	Other
Academic support or tutoring						
Financial aid questions						
Support for personal needs						

11. Please specify "other" for academic support or tutoring/ financial aid questions/ support for personal needs _____

Section 3: Experiences With Coaching

Next, we would like to know about how and where you share information with your current coach.

1. How do you share your academic information such as grades and courses with your current coach?
 - I log in to my student portal with my coach (for example WISER, WebAdvisor, myNEU, mySuffolk, my RCC, My Ben Portal).
 - I give my coach access to my login information so she or he can access my information herself or himself
 - My coach gets my academic information directly from my school
 - I don't share my academic information with my coach
 - I don't know

2. When you meet with your current coach in-person, where do you meet most often?
 - On campus in a public area (e.g., lobby, student center)
 - On campus in the same office or center
 - Off campus at a location selected by me
 - Off campus at a location selected by my coach
 - At the local organization/office where my coach works
 - Other (please describe: _____)

3. How much do you agree with the following statements about your meetings with your current coach: *(Please check only one for each item)*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The space where my coach and I meet has the privacy I need.					
The location(s) where I meet with my coach has all the resources (like access to internet) that we need.					
The location(s) where I meet with my coach is convenient for me.					
I often see my coach around campus.					

Section 4: Your Background

In this section, we have a few questions about you.

1. At which college/university are you currently enrolled?
(Dropdown menu)
2. 22.2) What is the name of the college/university you are currently enrolled? _____
[Program: If 22= other]
3. Were you enrolled at an institution during fall 2014?
[Program: If 22= not currently enrolled]
 - Yes

- No, I took the semester off
4. 23.1) Were you enrolled at this institution during fall 2014?
[Program: If 22= college/university or other]
 Yes
 No, I was enrolled at a different institution
 No, I took the semester off
5. 23.2) At which college/university were you enrolled during fall 2014? _____
[Program: If 23.1= 2]
6. 23.3) Do you plan to return to your current college/university next semester?
[Program: If 23.1= 1 or 3]
 Yes
 No, but I plan to return in the future
 No, I am planning to transfer to another college/university. Please specify: _____
 No, and I am not planning to return
7. 23.4) Do you plan to enroll in a college/university next semester?
[Program: If 23 = 2]
 Yes, please specify: _____
 No
8. What was your enrollment status when you first started coursework at your college?
 Full time (Enrolled for 12 or more credits per semester or per quarter or 24 or more hours a week)
 Part time (Enrolled for 12 or less credits per semester or per quarter or less than 24 hours a week)
9. What was your declared major at the time you **first enrolled** in college?
(Dropdown menu, "Undeclared" included)
10. Are you currently: (please check all that apply)
 Working for pay at a part-time or full-time job
 Taking care of a sick family member
 Taking care of your child
 None of the above
11. On average, how many hours do you work each week while you are enrolled in school? Enter number: _____
[Program: If Q26 =1]
12. How many jobs are you currently working for pay?
[Program: If Q26 = 1]
 None
 One
 More than one

(Source: 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey)

13. What is your main reason for working while you are enrolled in school?

[Program: If Q26 = 1]

- Pay living expenses
- Pay educational expenses
- Earn spending money
- To minimize the amount of debt you have
- To gain job experience
- To send money home
- Meet parents' expectations to work
- None of the above

(Source: 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey)

14. Do your life responsibilities (work, caring for family member/child) interfere with your ability to attend your college classes or finish assignments?

[Program: If Q26 ≠ 4]

- Yes, one per week or more
- Yes, a couple of times this semester
- No
- Unsure

15. Do you live...

- On-campus or in other school-provided housing
- With parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Somewhere else (off campus)

(Source: 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey)

Now, we'd like to ask you a few questions about your family.

16. Below, please indicate everyone who lives in your home, relatives and non-relatives. Begin with your parent, guardian, or closest relative (*please leave table blank if you live alone*).

Relationship to you (i.e., mother, step-mother, father etc.)	Gender Male or Female or Prefer not Say	Current Age (if Known)
[Dropdown]		

17. Please check here if you have more than 10 relatives/non-relatives in your home

- There are more than 10 relatives/non-relatives in my home

18. Are you a legal guardian or have you had any biological children? That is, children born to you or, children for whom you are the natural mother or father?

- Yes
- No

(Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS))

19. How many children? (*dropdown*)

[Program: If Q33 = Yes]

20. Do you currently financially contribute to anyone else's support, such as children, parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, or other relatives, whether or not they currently live with you?

- Yes
- No

(Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS))

Section 5: Academic Experiences

In this section, we would like to learn about your academic record and preparation for college/university.

1. Which of the following best describes your grade point average at your current college/university through the end of your most recent term?

- Mostly As (3.75 and above)
- As and Bs (3.25-3.74)
- Mostly Bs (2.75-3.24)
- Bs and Cs (2.25-2.74)
- Mostly Cs (1.75-2.24)
- Cs and Ds (1.25-1.74)
- Mostly Ds or below (below 1.24)

(Source: 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey)

2. While enrolled in college, have you ever...

	Yes	No
Been on the honor roll or dean's list?		
Withdrawn from a course after the normal drop/add deadline?		
Received a grade of incomplete?		
Repeated a course for a higher grade?		
Been placed on academic probation?		

(Source: 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey)

3. To what extent did the following high school courses prepare you for college?

	Not at all	Somewhat	A great deal	Did not take in high school
High school math				
High school science courses				
High school English or writing courses				
High school vocational or technical courses				

(Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS))

4. Think of the hardest class you took last semester. Compared with other students in that class would you say your abilities were:

- Very much above average
- Above average
- Average
- Below average

- Very much below average
5. When you were working at a challenging task in that class, how confident were you that you would succeed?
- Extremely confident
 - Very confident
 - Confident
 - Somewhat confident
 - Not at all confident

Section 6: Educational Goals

Next, we have a couple of questions about your educational goals.

1. What were your reasons for choosing to enroll at your current college/university for your undergraduate classes? (Please check all that apply)
- Earn a degree or certificate
 - Earn course credits needed for a program at a different school
 - Take courses for recreation, self-improvement or personal interest
 - Gain job or occupational skills
 - Prepare for transfer to a four-year school
 - Other reason not listed

(Source: 2004/09 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) Longitudinal Study Survey)

2. If there were no barriers, how far in school would you want to go?
- Complete a certificate or diploma from a school that provides occupational training
 - Complete an Associate's degree—that is, a two-year college degree
 - Complete a Bachelor's degree—that is, a four-year college degree
 - Complete a Master's degree
 - Complete a Ph.D., M.D., law degree, or other high level professional degree
 - I don't know

(Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), High School Longitudinal Survey of 2009 (HSLs))

3. As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will actually get?
- Complete a certificate or diploma from a school that provides occupational training
 - Complete an Associate's degree—that is, a two-year college degree
 - Complete a Bachelor's degree—that is, a four-year college degree
 - Complete a Master's degree
 - Complete a Ph.D., M.D., law degree, or other high level professional degree
 - I don't know

(Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), High School Longitudinal Survey of 2009 (HSLs))

Section 7: How To Improve Coaching

Finally, please share with us how you think coaching could be improved.

1. Which services or supports provided by your Success Boston coach were most helpful during your first year of college? (please check all that apply)
- Academic preparation & tutoring
 - Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion
 - Registering for classes & course selection
 - Exploring majors & academic pathways
 - Time management & study skills
 - Connecting to other campus resources

- Helping my family understand and support why I am in college
- Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus
- Career counseling, job planning, or job preparation
- Understanding transfer process to four-year institution
- Managing life responsibilities (family, home, work)
- Other_____

2. In which specific areas or issues would you like additional support from your coach? (*please check all that apply*)

- Academic preparation & tutoring
- Financial aid counseling & FAFSA completion
- Registering for classes & course selection
- Exploring majors & academic pathways
- Time management & study skills
- Connecting to other campus resources
- Helping my family understand and support why I am in college
- Getting involved with cultural or other student groups on campus
- Career counseling, job planning, or job preparation
- Understanding transfer process to four-year institution
- Managing life responsibilities (family, home, work)
- Other_____

3. Is there anything else you would like us to know about your experience with Success Boston coaching? (*open ended*)

250 character limit

4. Please share a short story about a time when your coach helped you overcome a challenge.

250 character limit

Thank you for taking the Success Boston survey!
Please click the submit button to save and complete the survey.
You will receive an email with your \$10 Starbucks e-gift card in the next 4 weeks.

Appendix D: Organization Descriptions

American Student Assistance (ASA)

American Student Assistance (ASA) is a private nonprofit based in Boston that employs approximately 500 associates. Founded in 1956, ASA began as an organization focused on the financial literacy of students pursuing higher education. In 1984, ASA established its College Planning Center at the Boston Public Library in an effort to make postsecondary support and assistance accessible to all students. In 2009, ASA added the TRIO Talent Search and GEAR UP programs which support middle and high school students in select Boston Public Schools. In the same year, the organization also began participating in the Success Boston Coaching program providing continued support and guidance to students as they transition out of high school into college. Many students in Success Boston come from the GEAR UP and Talent Search programs. Beginning the summer before college, an education advisor works with students either one on one or in small groups to complete financial aid forms, enroll in courses, access campus resources and begin planning their majors and careers. ASA coaching is focused on developing students during their first two years of college then gradually reducing support as students become more independent and learn to advocate for themselves. The organization has established partnerships with Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) and UMass Boston and works primarily with Boston Public School graduates attending these two colleges. Relationships with BHCC and UMass Boston provide ASA education advisors more access to campus staff and resources at these institutions. Education advisors track student progress and performance by maintaining data in Salesforce of student enrollment, number of remedial courses taken, GPA, credits completed and a number of other academic and non-academic areas. Through Success Boston, ASA works primarily with students from low income and first generation backgrounds to ensure that higher education is accessible to students from the Boston area who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Bottom Line

Bottom Line is a privately funded non-profit organization that currently serves almost 4,000 students from offices in Boston, Worcester, New York, and Chicago. Since its founding in 1997, Bottom Line has worked to support students from underprivileged backgrounds apply and graduate from college. The organization provides one on one coaching to first generation and low income students through its College Access Program and College Success Program. The College Access Program is focused on helping juniors and seniors in high school prepare their college applications while the College Success Program is focused on helping students navigate and eventually graduate college. Students in the Success Program either apply directly to the program or transition from the Access Program to the Success Program. In addition to being first generation students from low income families, Bottom Line requires applicants for the College Success Program to live in one of the four sites where Bottom Line has offices (Boston, Worcester, New York City, Chicago) and attend one of their target colleges. Bottom Line target colleges are schools located near Bottom Line offices. In Massachusetts the organization has 20 target colleges. Coaching for students in the Success Program begins with the Summer Transition Program where students participate in different workshops designed to help introduce them to college. Coaches in the Success Program follow the DEAL model which focuses on four areas (degree, employability, aid and life). . To date, Bottom Line has helped more than 1,000 students graduate from college.

Boston Private Industry Council (BPIC)

Founded in 1979 the Boston Private Industry Council (BPIC) serves as an intermediary working to connect Boston residents to employment opportunities within the city. The PIC has a number of programs designed to prepare its members to enter the appropriate career or workforce environment including Career Exploration, Employment for BPS students, Classroom at the Workplace, College to Career, Out of School Youth, and Jobs and Training for Adults. In 2008, BPIC joined the Success Boston Coaching program and began providing post-secondary coaching to Boston Public School graduates attending local community colleges. A majority of the students served by the PIC are Black or Latino, first generation students, and Pell Grant eligible. Transition coaches work with students attending Bunker Hill Community College, Roxbury Community College, Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology and Mass Bay Community College. Through one on one mentoring, coaches work with students through their transition from high school to college. In addition PIC transition coaches help students access community resources such as housing, food banks and health services when necessary. Supporting college completion among BPS graduates aligns with the PIC's broader mission to strengthen the local economy by creating eligible candidates within Boston's communities to meet local labor demands. Per year, BPIC connects around 3,000 teenagers to jobs and internships through the School to Career initiative. Additionally, PIC employs three transition coaches that support 260 community college students as part of the Success Boston Coaching program.

Freedom House

Founded in 1949 Freedom House is committed to working with youth from underserved communities to provide them a path toward upward social mobility through education. Programs provided by Freedom House include PUSH High School, PUSH College, Summer Intensive Institute, Communiversity, and Technology Center. Through its Preparing Urban Students for Success in High School and Higher Education programs, PUSH High School and PUSH College, Freedom House targets students from low income backgrounds, students of color, immigrants and first generation students residing in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, South Boston, Jamaica Plain, Roslindale and Hyde Park. The program is grounded in Melinda Karp's research "*Toward a New Understanding of Non-Academic Student Support.*" The PUSH High School program currently works with students from Snowden International School in Boston, MA. The program supports students on their path to graduate high school and apply to college. PUSH College supports students as they transition into college. Freedom House has established partnerships with Bunker Hill Community College and UMass Boston. Coaches meet with students one on one and also check in via email and phone. Student progress and performance is tracked using Salesforce. Freedom House tracks student performance in a number of areas including re-enrollment, credits earned, remedial course enrollment, transfer rates, and overall academic achievement. Freedom House's mission is to provide resources and support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds to mold them into successful and civically engaged members of society.

Hyde Square Task Force (HSTF)

Founded in 1991, Hyde Square Task Force (HSTF), a Jamaica Plain organization dedicated to transforming youth and community, works with over 1,000 children and teenagers every year. Their community work includes programs such as arts enrichment, leadership development and college preparation services. Over 90 percent of students served by HSTF are African American or Latino and a large portion come from families that do not speak English at home. Through their programs, HSTF works to engage and empower youth and their families in an effort to improve their

community. The Paths to College and Careers Program (PCCP) is one of the youth development programs at HSTF. The program begins preparing students for the college process beginning in the 9th grade. It targets Boston Public School students who live and attend school in Jamaica Plain and Roxbury, and youth who come from low-income families and who have a grade point average of C or below. Through the Success Boston Coaching program HSTF has been able to expand their PCCP services to include transition coaching through the College Success Program. Coaches in the College Success Program meet with students one on one and provide support in a number of areas including class registration, the financial aid process, declaring a major, connecting students to campus resources, among other areas. Coaches track student performance using the Salesforce database and have also established relationships with the colleges and universities attended by their students such as UMass Boston and Bunker Hill Community College. Through its PCCP and College Success Program, Hyde Square Task Force continues to work towards its mission to transform its youth and transform its community.

Sociedad Latina

Based in Roxbury, MA, Sociedad Latina is an organization focused on youth development within its surrounding community. The organization, founded in 1968, mentors youth from ages 11 – 21 and serves 3,000 youth and adults each year. Sociedad Latina is particularly focused on the development of Latino Youth. Sixty-six percent of its members are Latino and all members come from low income backgrounds. The organization follows the Pathways to Success model which focuses on four areas, Education, Workforce Development, Civic Engagement, and Arts and Culture. The Mission Possible! College Access Program is one of the organization's education programs designed to help students begin preparing for college beginning as early as the 9th grade. Throughout their high school careers, students are mentored by college students and alumni of the organization on how to prepare for and approach the college process. They not only receive advice and support with their academics but they also begin learning about the college application process and the financial aid process. Since joining the Success Boston Coaching program in 2014, Sociedad Latina has expanded its high school support services to include transition coaching for students enrolling in college. Coaches meet with students one on one and continue to further support students as they transition into college. The Success Boston Coaching program allows Sociedad Latina to continue to build on the relationships the organization has already formed with its members and support them through their college careers to graduation. This aligns with the organization's mission to support youth development in its community and to provide opportunities to youth and families from underserved backgrounds.

West End House

An organization with over 1,500 members, West End House Boys and Girls Club has been an active community center for youth since 1906. Founded as a clubhouse for Eastern European immigrant boys living in the West End neighborhood of Boston, the organization has since diversified its members to include children of immigrants from over 40 different countries. A majority of members come from low-income backgrounds with more than 70 percent earning less than \$25,000 per year and receiving some sort of public assistance, and close to 90 percent qualifying for free and reduced lunch. About 60 percent of the children at West End House come from the Allston-Brighton area and the rest from surrounding neighborhoods such as Dorchester, Roxbury and Mattapan. Children become members of West End House when they are as young as 7 years old, staying with the program from elementary school until they graduate high school. West End House is focused on developing its members by providing programs in academic success and college preparation,

leadership and career development, visual and performing arts, and fitness and nutrition. Academic success and college preparation are high priorities at West End House. Through the Success Boston Coaching program, West End House has integrated a College Persistence Program with a trained College Success Coach who is responsible for supporting students in academic and non-academic areas as they transition and navigate their respective colleges and universities. This addition to West End House programming supports the organization's mission to nurture its members from start to finish as they grow and develop into successful and productive citizens.

Appendix E: Selected Quotes from Student Survey

One hundred and ninety students answered either one or both of the open-ended questions at the end of the student survey. We reviewed the responses, categorized them by support topic.

Academic Support

- Last semester I was challenged with writing the longest paper I have ever been assigned (15 pages). I was freaking out but my coach gave me pointers and helped me calm down. I got an A in the class so I must have done well on the final paper.
- I thought it was impossible to pass my English class, but she helped me with essays and I was so nervous to take my final and she helped me believe in myself. I ended up with an A in the class and she was very happy that she was proud of me.
- During my first semester, I had one class, which was math, and I was struggling with it to the point that I had no hope in passing. My success coach suggested I get tutored and suggested that I can do whatever I put my mind to. That it important to me because once I believe I can't do it than I will keep that mentality and basically set myself up for failure. Having a coach there to motivate me is the very motivation I need.
- During my first semester of college, I was having a hard time with a class and my coach gave me ideas on how to ask for a [way] to improve my grade. Her idea help[ed] me so much that I was able to pass my finals and be proud of my grade.
- In my first semester of college it was very rocky. I wasn't at the GPA [to] wanted to be at. My [coaching organization] coach had confidence in me and never told me to give it. He told me that it was better that I messed up in my freshman year then my senior year because i still had time to raise my GPA. After my second semester I passed every class, as well as this semester I am on track to passing every class. I am happy the my coach had faith in me because my GPA is increasing and I feel more happier about myself and school

Financial Aid Support

- In this semester, I forgot to renew my FAFSA for next year since I didn't check my email regularly. When I need help about my FAFSA renewal process, my coach email and text me to ask about the day to meet up, so she can help me to explain about the late due date of the FAFSA. After that, I went home and followed her instructions and successfully completed my renewal in that night.
- When the financial aid wasn't sufficient, he helped me through the appeal process and my school actually increased my award significantly!
- Last semester I was struggling to register for this semester. I did not have any money or source to pay my fall semester and she gave the hope that I was going to do. So, we look for temporary jobs for me to be able to pay for school. I found in which I worked all throughout the winter break and I was able to pay for the semester and register for my spring classes.
- There was a little problem with my financial aid. My coach saw the problem, we both went in to get the situation fix. She was very helpful, I know I can always count on her.

- No one at my house understands how financial aid works neither do I, so I was in great need of help from the coaches. They helped me sort out my finances and renew the FAFSA.

Balancing Work, Life and School

- My Family wants to dictate how many classes I take and how many hours I work, however, with [coach name]'s help I was able to explain the necessary points as to how many classes I should take based on my schedule.
- Not long ago I was having a really hard time balancing school and my family issues. They were getting on my way to study and even sleep. Thanks to my coach she told me to tell my family how I felt and fitted me to tutors so I could catch up with my school work and today my family understand that my school comes first.
- When I was struggling with balancing my school work and having a job, my coach suggested me to take the best approach that would benefit me the most. I thought school was more important since I paid my tuition for it and work could be saved for later.

Personal and Emotional Support

- Whenever I have an issue at school and or home the first person I contact is my mentor and she always gives me the most helpful advice and or solution.
- I think that my coach helped me gain confidence in myself and think positive no matter what my negative circumstances where. My coach made sure I didn't give up or stop trying at all.
- Starting college was a challenge within itself. My coach being persuasive and rooting for me made me realize I can do it, even if they're the only person in my support system, and 2 years later I'm halfway to my degree.
- One of the biggest challenges my coach helped me overcome was my legal status issues, and helping me understand the college process and application
- Last spring semester I was being very lazy and stopped doing work. I was very behind in my classes and I had to drop two classes as a result. My coach, [coach name], helped me overcome my disappointment and helped me realize that there was no reason to drown myself with resentment and regret because there were still opportunities for me. With the help of my coach I was able to feel resilient and continue working through stress to overcome my difficult situations.

Navigating College

- There was a time I was lost, I didn't know how to find my classes how to start for my classes and get registered. It was my first semester in college and I didn't know how to go about anything. My coach was there helping each step through everything.
- So glad I found success because I was completely lost as a freshman and first time college student in my family.
- I remember that I did not know how to register for classes my first semester but thanks god my coach was there to give me the support I needed and helped me to create a good schedule because I did not know how college work and that, but someone was there for me to give me the support I needed.

- I remember last year, the summer time of 2014 when [Coach] whet over and beyond every single obstacle to get me registered for the fall class. I did not have a coach at that point in time I would have given up. I would not go to college last fall.
- When I decided to transfer schools he was extremely supportive and helpful.

Time Management

- I poorly time managed at the start of the semester and my coach greatly assisted me in helping me see the practicalness [sic] of working on setting a schedule aside to work on my school work as well as tips to isolate myself so I'm not tempted to go and chat with friends.
- I was swamped in my first semester of college, and didn't have much motivation to do my best during the semester. My coach helped me obtain my confidence and gave me time management skills when I met up with her, explaining to her my problem. Now, in my second semester, I have am more confident with my work and do my work ahead of time.
- A time when my coach has helped me overcome a challenge is when she gave me the idea to get a[n] agenda/planner to help me with my time management skills. I was really struggling to remember when my assignments were due and getting an agenda really helped me stay organized.
- I was going through a tuff [sic] time managing my time in order to get all my homework done, and my coach gave a great tip that helped a lot.
- Time management is very difficult for me. My coach helped me lay out a calendar of what is currently going on in my life and she helped me understand how to choose my time wisely. I am a big procrastinator and she helped me figure specific times that were beneficial to me and my school work. I had to set my priorities straight. I figured out the time I needed for school work, my job and my social life.

General Support

- My coach has been a great help during college, I would ask her all the questions I had and she would take the time to go through all my problems with me.
- My coach [coach name] calm[ed] down my frustration when I felt like giving up and she pushed me to go harder.
- It's good to know I can always come to my Success Boston coach with questions!
- My coach is always reliable and knows his priorities. He makes a great amount of effort to get what needed to be done. He's a great coach.
- I love having a coach, they are always there when I need advice and I don't know what to do.

Areas for Improvement

- Councilors [sic] should be consistent and not vary from year to year.
- My first two coaching were amazing, but my current one in not as caring and proactive like my first two!

- Working with success Boston for the most part was a very irritating experience. I am the first person in my family to even graduate from high school so even considering college was big to me and my family. Unfortunately I do not have support or even any resources at home that could had help better me in my first year of college. I did need a lot of help balancing work, life and school all together and was hoping to have a better understanding on how everything works. I have tried contacting my success Boston coach a numerous of times but for some reason I would go weeks without a response and when I finally did get a response it was never anything beneficial to me. I have tried setting up times to meet but again getting in contact was nearly in possible. I work a full time job and try my best to work around my schedule to meet with my coach. I just wish they could do the same.

Appendix F: Full Implementation Index Scores

Exhibit F.1 Full SBC Implementation Index Scores

Type of Element	Index Element	Organization C	Organization E	Organization D	Organization G	Organization A	Organization B	Organization F	
Total Score		38.2	37.2	37.9	39.5	38	31.4	36.3	
Constructs	Supportive Structure	15	14.5	14	16	15	14	12	
	Coaching Processes & Activities	23.2	22.7	23.9	23.5	23	17.4	24.3	
Components	Supportive Structure	7	7	6	8	8	8	6	
	Coaching in Place	8	7.5	8	8	7	6	6	
	Ongoing Engagement	8.5	9	8	9	7.5	4.5	9	
	Student-Coach Connection	8.3	6.7	7.3	8.7	8.3	7.3	7.3	
Indicators	Transition Activities	6.4	7	8.6	5.8	7.2	5.6	8	
	Coaching Organization	Articulates expectations for coaches	2	3	3	2	3	3	3
		Provides training for coaches	2	3	2	3	3	2	2
		Encourages participation in SBC	3	1	1	3	2	3	1
	Coaching in Place	Campus meeting space	3	2.5	3	2	2	1	2
		Access to student data	2	3	2	3	3	2	2
		Facilitates integration with campus supports	3	2	3	3	2	3	2
	Ongoing Engagement	Mode of Communication	2.5	3	3	3	2.5	2.5	3
		Intensity of one-on-one interactions	3	3	3	3	3	1	3
		Frequency of interactions	3	3	2	3	2	1	3
Provides support for re-engagement		3	1	3	3	3	3	2	
Student-Coach Connection	2.3	2.7	2.3	2.7	2.3	2.3	1.3	2.3	

Type of Element	Index Element	Organization C	Organization E	Organization D	Organization G	Organization A	Organization B	Organization F
Transition Activities	Number of coaches with whom students have worked	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
	Focus of support	2	2	3	2	3	1	3
	Exposure to support	2.4	2	2.6	2.8	2.2	2.6	3
	Varies activities between first and second year students	2	3	3	1	2	2	2

