Success Boston Coaching at Scale: Impacts on Short-Term College Success

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Policy Context

- Jobs that require a BA continue to increase at a higher pace than any other educational level
- About half (52%) of Boston’s 2011 public high school graduates who enrolled in college graduated within 6 years
- Low-income students, first-generation students, and racial/ethnic minorities are underrepresented in postsecondary education
Citywide collaboration among the Boston Foundation, Boston Public Schools, City of Boston, local nonprofits, and local colleges to support college completion

Promote evidence-based practices to help students succeed in higher education and prepare to enter workforce

Core component is transition support to Boston high school graduates enrolling in local 2-year and 4-year colleges
Success Boston Coaching Model

**IDENTIFY**
Nonprofit organizations recruit Boston high school students in transition to college

**PARTNER**
Nonprofit organizations and local colleges partner to coordinate coaching on campus

**CONNECT**
Students and coaches connect in-person on and off campus, via text, email, or phone

**REFER**
Coaches refer students to resources and support services at their colleges

**SUPPORT**
Coaches provide ongoing, one-on-one support to students on academic, financial, career, and personal topics

**GRADUATE**
Coaching Intensity

One-on-one coach-student interactions in 2015-16

Average number: 6
Number of interactions vary by student—most students met with coach at least once per semester

Typical length: 34 minutes
One-on-one interactions tended to last between 25 and 45 minutes

Average of one-on-one coaching per year= 3.5 hours
In fall 2015, Boston Coaching for Completion (BosC4C) expanded reach of SBC program with Social Innovation Fund grant funding from Corporation for National and Community Service.
Who SBC Serves

- Students are from groups too often under-represented in postsecondary education
  - 93% identify as non-white
  - 48% are economically disadvantaged
  - 2.46 average GPA
Research Questions

**Overall Impacts:**
What is the effect of Success Boston coaching on student success in college?

**Differences in Impacts:**
How, if at all, do the impacts of Success Boston coaching differ by student characteristics and features of the coaching?
Analysis Approach

- First two cohorts of scale up, entering college in 2015 and 2016
- Quasi-experimental design
- SBC students matched with similar non-coached students:
  - Same cohort
  - Graduated from similar high schools
  - Enrolled in the same college
  - Share similar academic and background characteristics
Outcomes

- College persistence into 2nd and 3rd years
- Full-time status

- Cumulative GPA
- Credit accumulation
- Non-credit bearing courses

- FAFSA Renewal
Data Sources

1. Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
2. BOSTON Public Schools Focus on Children
3. National Student Clearinghouse
4. Success Boston Program Database
5. 11 Boston area colleges
Persistence into 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} Years

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adjusted Comparison Group Mean</th>
<th>Treatment Group Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persistence into the 2nd Year</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>82.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persistence into the 3rd Year</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>74.7</td>
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\{ 4.3^* \}  
\{ 2.8 \}

* Impact is significant at the 5 percent level
Full-time Enrollment

Full-Time Status

Percentage of Semesters

Adjusted Comparison
Group Mean

Treatment
Group Mean

3.7*

* Impact is significant at the 5 percent level
* Impact is significant at the 5 percent level
Non-Credit Bearing Courses

Semesters Enrolled in Non-Credit Bearing Courses

- Adjusted Comparison Group Mean
- Treatment Group Mean

Number of Semesters

0.65

0.67

0.03

* Impact is significant at the 5 percent level
Credit Accumulation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Percentage of Credits</th>
<th>Adjusted Comparison Group Mean</th>
<th>Treatment Group Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>3.1*</td>
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* Impact is significant at the 5 percent level
FAFSA Renewal

FAFSA renewal

Percentage of Students

Adjusted Comparison Group Mean

Treatment Group Mean

* Impact is significant at the 5 percent level

6.2*
Differences in Impacts by Student Characteristics

- Examined differences in coaching impacts by student characteristics
  - Gender
  - Underrepresented minority status
  - High school GPA
  - Two vs. four-year college attendance
- No consistent patterns found
Differences in Impacts by Frequency of Coaching

- Persistence into 2nd Year of College: High 11.9*, Low -2.0
- Persistence into 3rd Year of College: High 10.9*, Low -1.6
- Cumulative GPA: High 0.16*, Low -0.10
- FAFSA Renewal: High 13.3*, Low 2.9

* Impact is significant at the 5 percent level
Summary of Findings

- Compared to non-coached students, SBC students:
  - Are 5% more likely to persist into the 2nd year of college
  - Are 6% more likely to be enrolled full-time
  - Accumulated 7% more credits toward graduation
  - Are 8% more likely to renew their FAFSAs

- Impacts are concentrated among students who experience more frequent coach interactions
Trends in Student Persistence

Percentage of Students

2nd year of college  3rd year of college  4th year of college

Persistence

- 2013 and 2014 Coached Students
- 2013 and 2014 Comparison Students
- 2015 and 2016 Coached Students
- 2015 and 2016 Comparison Students
Explaining Trends: Student Support Services

- Participating colleges often provide multiple non-academic support services:
  - **Resource centers** that assist with non-academic needs like childcare, housing, and food
  - **Coaching and peer mentoring** focused on supporting first-year students and underrepresented minorities
  - **Skills workshops and group seminars** to help students develop personal competencies
Next Steps

- Add additional cohort of students who entered college in the fall of 2017
- Follow students for up to 6 years after college entrance
- Focus on degree/credential completion

Next reports scheduled for release in 2021 and 2022
Contact

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