

Ninth Grade Counts Finds a New Way to Shine



THE SITUATION

15% OF STUDENTS DO NOT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THEIR 9TH GRADE YEAR.

WHY IT MATTERS

STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE 9TH GRADE WITH SIX OR MORE CREDITS ARE **4X** MORE LIKELY TO GRADUATE.

BACKGROUND

Collaboration is essential to helping students start high school strong, and the summer is a critical opportunity to build a bridge from junior high.

For over a decade, schools and community partners have teamed up through the Ninth Grade Counts (NGC) partnership with a commitment to identify and engage the students who will benefit most from an extra boost into high school.

Participants in NGC programs are given the opportunity to earn .5 credit to get a jumpstart on their 9th grade year.

WHAT CHANGED?

The program requirements in place before COVID-19 emphasized academic growth and exposure to career opportunities. With a severe lockdown in place, college and company visits were not possible and our community partners were advocating for a social, emotional and mental health focus.

OUR RESPONSE

We brought district partners together to shift program criteria to address the lockdown and its multiple effects on students.

Together, we:

- Modified program requirements to ensure students received credit
- Provided culturally-responsive programming
- Better accommodated English language learners and multiple learning styles with expanded options for earning credit in a remote environment



FACTOID: AHR ensures agreements are held in place between districts and CBOs so students can receive credit by participating in their programs.



7,674 STUDENTS
have participated
in **Ninth Grade
Counts** from
2009-2020.

THE RESULTS SO FAR

88 STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE 2020 PROGRAM WERE ON TRACK TO RECEIVE HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT.

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HARDSHIP AMPLIFIED BY THE PANDEMIC HAD ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY, CULTURALLY-SPECIFIC PROGRAMMING.

STUDENTS BUILT POSITIVE, SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH NEW REMOTE CHANNELS.

WHEN FUNDING BECAME AVAILABLE FOR SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING, CBOs IMPLEMENTED PLANS SO STUDENTS WOULD STILL RECEIVE CREDIT.

PARTNER STORIES

"We all know that despite our best efforts, too many of our kids have lost ground during the pandemic—both socially and academically. All Hands Raised stepped in with the Ninth Grade Counts summer initiative and helped rally the entire community together to help our kids catch up and get ready for high school. This is work that we just can't do alone as districts, and that's the value of All Hands Raised."

DR. PAUL E. COAKLEY

SUPERINTENDENT, MULTNOMAH COUNTY EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT



"We have created pathways to on-time high school completion and post-secondary enrollment in our community through our partnership with AHR."

MELISSA MCCOY

DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ACCESS PROGRAMS, LATINO NETWORK