

2024–2025 Outcome Evaluation of George B. Thomas Sr. Learning Academy's Saturday School Program

September 2026



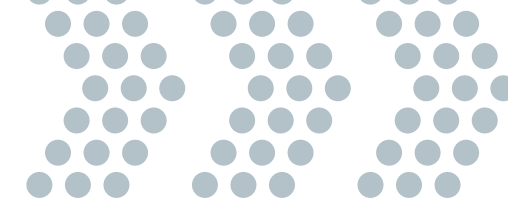
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Shared Accountability

Applied Research and Evaluation





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Saturday School Program

2024-2025 Program Outcome Evaluation



Executive Summary

Background

In 1994, the George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy (GBTLA) established the Saturday School program, through a collaboration between Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and dedicated community members to address the growing need for supporting student skill of grade-level learning outcomes at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The Saturday School program was designed to provide academic tutoring and instruction with certified teachers in a supportive environment for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students. The program focuses on reading, language arts, mathematics, and test-taking skills with additional support in other courses and preparation for advanced placement exams. The program serves approximately 1,700 students each year across nine school clusters and a virtual center.

Evaluation Scope

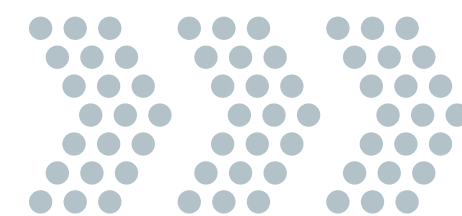
The purpose of this outcome evaluation was to compare academic outcomes in English language arts, literacy and mathematics between MCPS students who participated in Saturday School and their non-participating peers, using standardized assessment scores and GPA as metrics.

Methodology

This outcome evaluation was grounded in a quasi-experimental mixed-methods design, which integrated multiple data sources with appropriate statistical procedures to address multiple outcomes across grade levels. The measures included data that were collected by MCPS. Background and evaluation planning was developed through document review of the program materials, previous MCPS evaluations, and communications with program staff. The analytic samples were comprised of Saturday School participants, who attended at least one session and a matched comparison group, with the same demographic composition, during the 2024–2025 school year. The limitations of the attendance data may have reduced the ability to detect an effect. There were 22 sessions offered and attendance was not collected beyond session 11. Those who attended those 11 sessions were indicated as attending 50% or more sessions. The comparison groups, based on their particular outcome variables, were matched on the variables of Grade, Race/Ethnicity, Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) status, Individualized Education Program (IEP) status, Emergent Multilingual Learner (EML) status, and fall baseline academic performance during the 2024–2025 school year. Results for analyses were reported for Saturday School participants compared to a matched comparison group. Outcome measures included Spring 2025 Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) composite score, Spring 2025 Measures of Academic Progress for Reading (MAP-R) RIT score, Spring 2025 Measures of Academic Progress for Mathematics (MAP-M) RIT score, Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program for English Language Arts and Literacy (MCAP ELA/L) scale score, Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program for Mathematics (MCAP Math) scale score, and 2025 Marking Period 4 Marking Period Average (MP4 MPA). Analyses include descriptive statistics and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) tests to examine between-group differences in average score differences on outcome measures, accounting for student race/ethnicity, service receipt, and prior performance.

Key Findings and Conclusion

Evaluation analyses revealed no statistically significant differences in academic performance, specifically in reading, English language arts, literacy, and mathematics, between Saturday School participants and a matched comparison group. However, these findings are subject to several data limitations. Attendance data was very incomplete, and attendance levels could only be broadly categorized into two tiers: below 50% and 50% or above. There was also over 40% of Saturday School participants who had missing attendance data. The impact of varying attendance levels on student outcomes could not be tested for statistical significance. Consistently tracking accurate, granular attendance data would align with evidence-based practices and enable future evaluations to isolate the program’s dose-response relationship. Therefore, it is recommended that the Saturday School program continue while implementing a more detailed attendance tracking system to evaluate whether program attendance is associated with academic performance.



MAINTAIN CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION FOR ONE YEAR

The outcome evaluation of the Saturday School program found little evidence that students in elementary, middle, and high school demonstrated better academic performance from participating in the program as measured by assessments scores including the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Measures of Academic Progress for Reading (MAP-R), Measures in Academic Progress for Mathematics (MAP-M), Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program for English Language Arts and Literacy (MCAP ELA/L), Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program for Mathematics (MCAP Math), and marking period four marking period average (MP4 MPA). Primary grade (Kindergarten–Grade 2) analyses included the outcomes of DIBELS composite scores and MAP-M RIT scores. Intermediate grade (Grade 3–Grade 5) analyses included MAP-R RIT scores, MAP-M RIT scores, MCAP ELA/L scale scores, and MCAP Math scale scores. Middle school (Grade 6–Grade 8) analyses included MAP-R RIT scores, MAP-M RIT scores, MCAP ELA/L score scores, MCAP Math scale scores, and MP4 MPA. High school (Grade 9–Grade 12) analyses only included MP4 GPA. The comprehensive results suggested that the program should be taking better measures to record attendance as there is wide variation in attendance, as well as missing data, which makes it difficult to detect differences in those who attended Saturday School and a comparison group of those who did not. By taking this step, future analysts can better detect effects of the intervention and be able to see the effect of level of dose of the program through number of sessions attended.





Program Description

Overview

The Saturday School program was established in 1986 by members of the Mu Nu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity as the Olney Saturday School. This program was established to address the growing need for supporting student mastery of grade-level learning outcomes at elementary, middle, and high school levels. Saturday School provides academic tutoring and instruction with certified teachers aligned with the MCPS curriculum. The support is offered every Saturday throughout the school year at a variety of schools in the district. The Saturday School program for Kindergarten through Grade 8 focuses on reading, language arts, and mathematics. For Grade 9–Grade 12, there is a focus on core subjects (English/language arts and mathematics) and support for high school assessments (e.g., MCAP). The Saturday School program is aligned with Goal 1 (Academic Excellence) of the Strategic Plan, specifically focused on Objective 1 through Objective 6 by helping all students achieve academic success in reading, literacy, and mathematics.

Locations

During the 2024–2025 school year, students were served across the following nine physical locations and one virtual:

- Albert Einstein High School
- Clarksburg High School
- Gaithersburg High School
- Montgomery Blair High School
- Northwest High School
- Paint Branch High School
- Rockville High School
- Springbrook High School
- Wheaton High School
- Virtual Center

These centers are all over the school district to provide convenient locations for all students.

2024-2025 Programs

Saturday School consists of various programs. The current evaluation focused solely on their Saturday School program for Kindergarten–Grade 12. The programs are from 8:30am–11:00am for up to 22 separate sessions throughout the school year. Staff is made up of certified teachers from all grade levels.

- **Saturday School Program (Kindergarten):** This program focuses on emotional development, early literacy, and mathematics skills while fostering social skills and emotional intelligence.
- **Saturday School Program (Grades 1–12):** This program focuses on reading, language arts, mathematics and core subjects with support for assessments. For high school students, there is an emphasis on college and career readiness.
- Other programs offered include the Rising Stars Pre-K Program, Coding, Cyber Robotics, SAT/ACT Prep, Adult Literacy, and Boolean Girl Coding.



Evaluation Scope

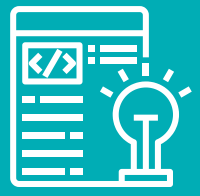
The goal of the current outcome evaluation was to use a variety of academic measures including assessments of literacy and mathematics to determine the level of effectiveness of Saturday School’s program during the 2024–2025 school year. The current evaluation also investigated the demographic characteristics of students who participated in Saturday School during the 2024-2025 school year and those of different attendance levels including attending 50% or more of sessions, or less than 50% (Evaluation Question 1 & 2). The small sample size and missing data in the Saturday School attendance file prevented any comparisons to be made based on attendance level, outside of descriptive statistics. As such the focus of this evaluation was on the effectiveness of the program as a whole (Evaluation Question 3).

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of this outcome evaluation was to compare academic outcomes in English language arts, literacy and mathematics between MCPS students who participated in Saturday School and their non-participating peers, using standardized assessment scores and GPA as metrics.

Evaluation Questions

- 1 What were the demographic characteristics of students (Kindergarten through Grade 12) who participated in Saturday School during the 2024–2025 school year?
- 2 What proportion of Saturday School participants in 2024–2025 maintained a level of attendance 50% or higher, and how did this vary across Kindergarten through Grade 12 and student racial/ethnic and service receipt groups?
- 3 What were the differences in literacy and mathematics achievement, as measured by standardized assessments and marking period average, between Saturday School participants and a matched comparison group in the 2024–2025 school year, after controlling for prior fall student performance, race/ethnicity, and service receipt?



Methodology

Program Indicators, Demographics, and Data Sources

Demographics and service groups were used to match students in the matched comparison group and as control variables. These measures included: underrepresented group status, Emergent Multilingual Learner (EML) status, Free and Reduced Price Meals System (FARMS) status, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) status.

Program Indicators

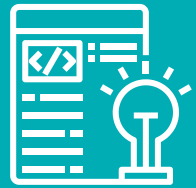
The following participation and attendance variables were derived from the registrations and number of sessions attended based on available files and document review.

- **Saturday School Participation:** The indicator for participation in Saturday School was determined by an attendance file listing all the students that were enrolled in Saturday School. Those enrolled with any level of attendance was included in the dataset.
- **Saturday School Attendance:** Students had an indicator of attending more than 50% of sessions or less than 50%, which was provided in the program file based on if they attended the first 11 sessions or not.
 - There was too much missing data to tabulate the individual number of sessions that a student attended.

Demographic Variables

The following demographic variables were used to develop the matched comparison groups in the final analytical samples.

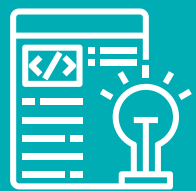
- **Race/Ethnicity (Underrepresented Group Status):** Race/Ethnicity was recoded into a dichotomous variable: 1) underrepresented or 2) not underrepresented. Underrepresented included Black and/or African American and Hispanic, and All Other Student Groups and not underrepresented included Asian, White, and Two or More Races. This definition has been used in a variety of academic papers and reviews within the realm of education (example: Syed et al., 2011).
- **EML Status:** Students who were developing a language other than English in their homes and have the opportunity to become bilingual or multilingual in school.
- **FARMS Status:** Students who were part of the FARMS program and received free or reduced price breakfast and lunch at school.
- **IEP Status:** Students who has a written statement and legal document designed to meet a student's individual needs. Every student who receives special education services must have an IEP.



To address Evaluation Question 3, several outcome measures including district assessments, state assessments, and marking period average were used. An ANCOVA model included these measures in the analyses. Assessments taken in the fall were used as baseline measures to match students in the comparison group and also as control variables, or covariates. The analyses used fall and spring Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Measures of Academic Progress for Reading (MAP-R), Measures of Academic Progress for Mathematics (MAP-M), Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program for English Language Arts and Literacy (MCAP ELA/L), Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program for Mathematics (MCAP Math), and Marking Period Average (MPA) as outcome and baseline measures, when possible. Each matched comparison group was matched using a different prior measure/baseline measure depending on the outcome measure that was being analyzed. Since the MCAP does not have a fall measure, fall MAP-M RIT and MAP-R RIT scores were used as the respective control measures. Performance for all these measures was measured by the score a student obtained. In the table below, you will see the measure, whether the fall measure was used as baseline, what was used as the outcome for that measure, and a description of the measure.

Baseline (Fall) and Outcome (Spring) Measures

Measure	Grades Included	Fall measure	Spring measure	Description
DIBELS Composite Score	Kindergarten–Grade 2	Yes	Yes	DIBELS is a widely used standardized set of assessments which measure phonics, reading fluency, and other literacy skills (Goffreda, Diperna, & Pedersen, 2009). It consists of subsets of items: Letter Naming Fluency, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, and Oral Reading Fluency.
MAP-R RIT Score	Grade 3–Grade 8	Yes, also used for MCAP ELA/L analysis	Yes	The MAP-R is a reliable measure of student progress that provides information on literacy to determine whether a student needs additional resources. The MAP-R assessments evaluate six reading areas including word recognition, reading comprehension and more. When students finish the MAP-R, they receive a score based on a Rasch Unit, also known as a RIT score, which represents student achievement at any given moment.
MAP-M RIT Score	Kindergarten–Grade 8	Yes, also used for MCAP Math analysis	Yes	The MAP-M district assessments are at grade level and are used to measure growth in mathematics content across five mathematics areas, including number process, statistics/probability, algebra, and more. As with the MAP-R, the MAP-M is computer adaptive and students receive a score based on a Rasch Unit.
MCAP ELA/L Scale Score	Grade 3–Grade 8	N/A	Yes	The MCAP ELA/L state assessments provide insight into student’s level of English language arts and literacy performance.
MCAP Math Scale Score	Grade 3–Grade 8	N/A	Yes	The MCAP Mathematics state assessments provide insight into student’s level understanding of mathematics by solving real-world problems.
MPA	Grade 6–Grade 12	MP1 MPA	MP4 MPA	This is the point average for a student’s marks in a specific marking period.



To address Evaluation Questions 1, 2, and 3, mixed methods quasi-experimental analyses, integrating multiple data sources, were conducted. This quasi-experimental approach utilized a 1:1 comparison group matched on demographics and prior academic measures. Study samples were comprised of Saturday School participants who enrolled in Saturday School at any time point during the year. The comparison group counterparts included selected students who matched the same-grade participants on student demographic characteristics and prior performance.

Study Samples



Each analytical sample used was comprised of students who were either in the Saturday Saturday School Program during the 2024–2025 school year or in a matched comparison group.



For Evaluation Questions 1 and 2, the sample of Saturday School participants was made up of MCPS students in the program. These program participants included students who were enrolled in Saturday School at any time point during the 2024-2025 school year ($n = 1,012$). There were 213 students who attended less than 50% of sessions and 360 who attended 50% or more. 439 participants were missing attendance data.



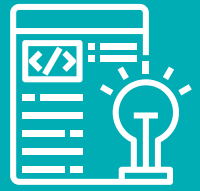
The matched comparison groups, for each sub-sample, included a sample of students who were not participating in Saturday School and were matched on student demographic characteristics and prior performance. Across all analyses, race/ethnicity, FARMS status, IEP status, EML status, and the fall score of the matching outcome measure were used to create a matched sample by matching every Saturday School participant to a student that was identical on all of the control variables but did not attend Saturday School.



Evaluation Question 3 Analytical Sample Sizes by Grade Level and Outcome Measure

Outcome Measure	Primary Grades (Kindergarten– Grade 2)	Intermediate Grades (Grade 3– Grade 5)	Middle School (Grade 6–Grade 8)	High School (Grade 9–Grade 12)
DIBELS Composite Score	544	NM	NM	NM
MAP-R RIT Score	NM	729	328	NM
MAP-M RIT Score	558	736	330	NM
MCAP ELA/L Scale Score	NM	726	325	NM
MCAP Math Scale Score	NM	734	328	NM
MP4 MPA	NM	NM	342	350

Note. Cells with NM (Not Measured) indicates that measure was not used for that grade level or was not applicable (e.g., Grade 3 DIBELS).



Methodology

Analytical Procedures

Analytical procedures included descriptive statistics for demographics (Evaluation Question 1), descriptive statistics describing those above 50% attendance and below 50% attendance for Saturday School (Evaluation Question 2), and analyses of covariance (ANCOVAs). Each ANCOVA was conducted by comparing a subject-specific comparison group and Saturday School participants, controlling for student race/ethnicity, service receipt, and prior performance (Evaluation Question 3). Effect sizes were computed for statistically significant findings from the ANOVA procedure to determine how meaningful differences were. Only significant test results were reported. IBM SPSS was used to run analyses (Field, 2024).

Descriptive Statistics & Significance Testing

For Evaluation Question 1, the descriptive statistics were reported by percentages of the same that are displayed for the Saturday School participants and the matched comparison group. As mentioned previously, the characteristics displayed were race/ethnicity, FARMS status, IEP status, EML status, and the fall measure that was used as a baseline measure.

For Evaluation Question 2, additional Pearson Chi-Square analyses were conducted to compare percentages of between those who attended 50% or more of sessions or those who attended less than 50% of sessions by race/ethnicity and service receipt. In addition, follow-up z-tests were conducted to compare column proportions between those who attended less than 50% and those who attended 50% or more. For these tests, those with missing attendance data were not included.

Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA)

For Evaluation Question 3, a series of ANCOVAs were conducted to examine differences between the matched comparison group and the Saturday School participant group. Each analysis had a different analytical sample based on a matched comparison group that was reflective of demographics of the Saturday School participants and the baseline measure used. In total, 12 statistical models were developed comparing these two groups (see pages eight and nine for more detail). Although the comparison group should control for the effects of the demographic and prior measures/baseline measures, they were included in the analyses as a precautionary measure to give the most accurate results.



Cost Structure

Cost Structure of 2024–2025 Academic School Year for Saturday School

Category	FY 2025 Costs
Consultant	\$210,000
Facilities Rentals	\$64,100
Materials	\$10,000
Other Insurance	\$20,700
Student Transportation/Other	\$45,000
Total Program Costs for MCPS	\$349,800



Estimated Costs

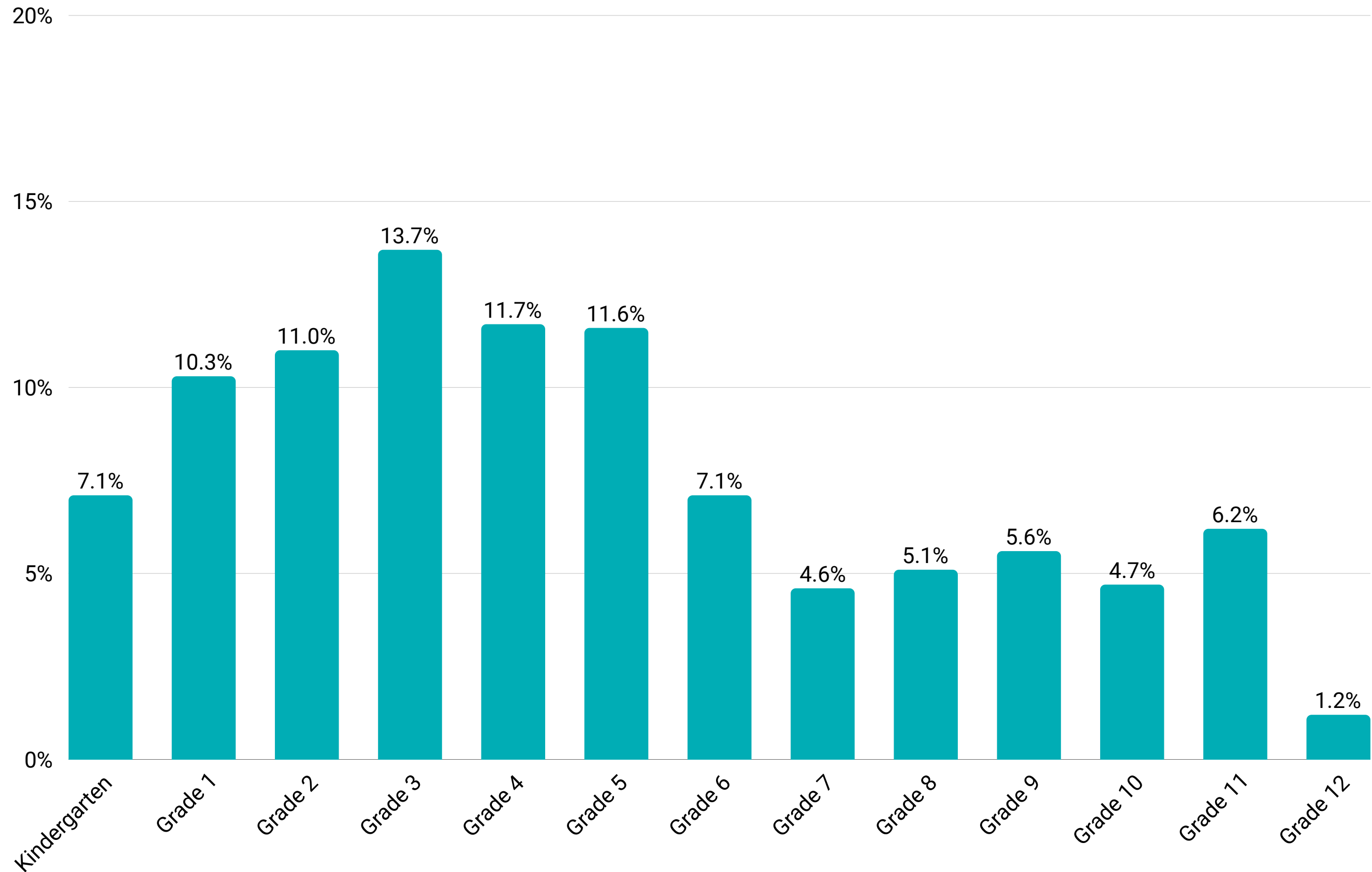
This table explicitly lists the estimated cost structure of Saturday School for the 2024-2025 academic school year. Since this is a joint effort with the George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, some costs are split with MCPS. MCPS pays for volunteers/staff/consultants (\$210,000), facilities rentals (\$64,100), materials (\$10,000), insurance (\$20,700), and transportation (\$45,000) necessary for the program. The estimated total program costs for MCPS is \$349,800.



Evaluation Question 1

Saturday School Student Demographics

Saturday School Participation by Grade (N = 1,012)



Findings

For Evaluation Question 1, a descriptive analysis of the sample of students who attended Saturday School was conducted. The file that was used for demographics was the daily enrollment file from the end of the 2024–2025 year.

The majority of Saturday School participants were those who attended elementary school. 65.3% of Saturday School participants attended elementary school ($n = 661$), 16.8% attended middle school ($n = 171$), and 17.7% attended high school ($n = 180$).

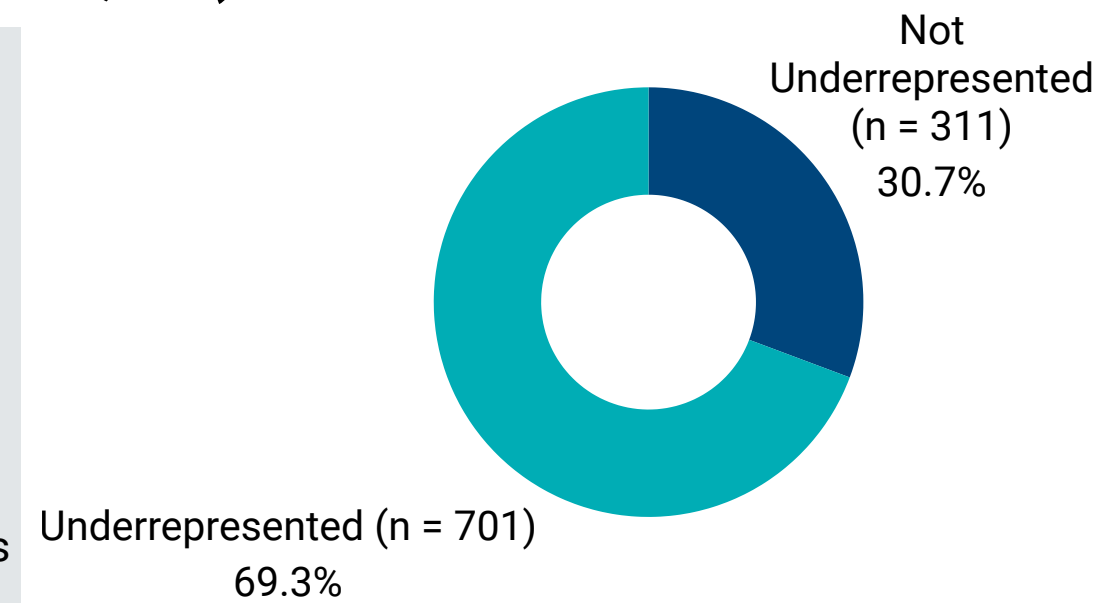
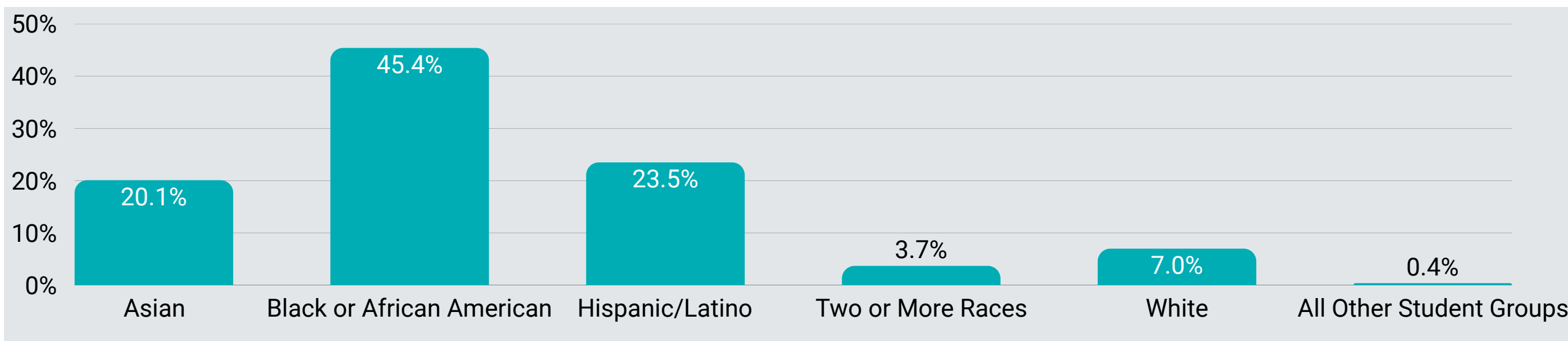
More specifically, the percentages of students representing the grades were:

- Kindergarten: 7.1%, $n = 72$
- Grade 1: 10.3%, $n = 104$
- Grade 2: 11.0% $n = 111$
- Grade 3: 13.7%, $n = 139$
- Grade 4: 11.7%, $n = 118$
- Grade 5: 11.6%, $n = 117$
- Grade 6: 7.1%, $n = 72$
- Grade 7: 4.6%, $n = 47$
- Grade 8: 5.1%, $n = 52$
- Grade 9: 5.6%, $n = 57$
- Grade 10: 4.7%, $n = 48$
- Grade 11: 6.2%, $n = 63$
- Grade 12: 1.2%, $n = 12$

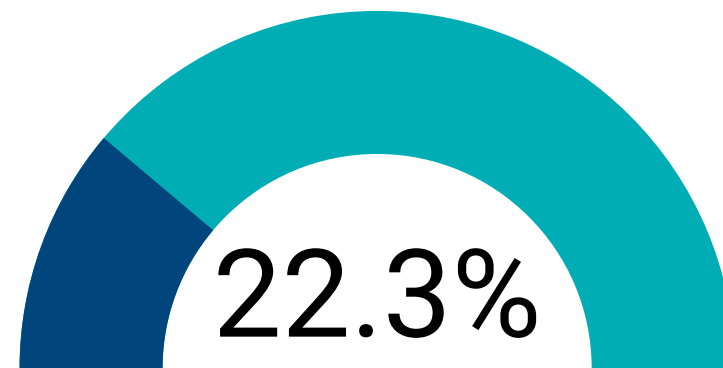


Evaluation Question 1

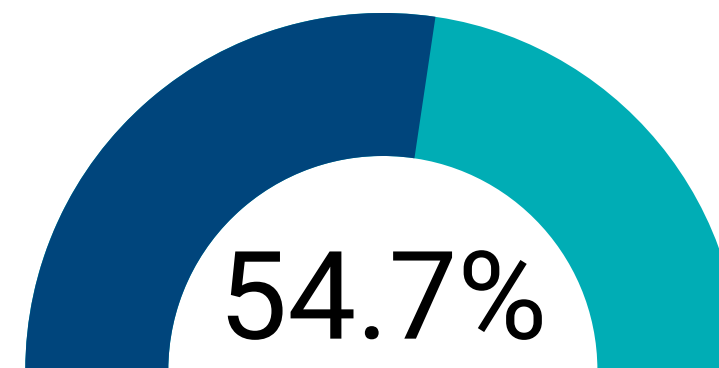
Racial and Ethnic Composition of Saturday School Participants (N = 1,012)



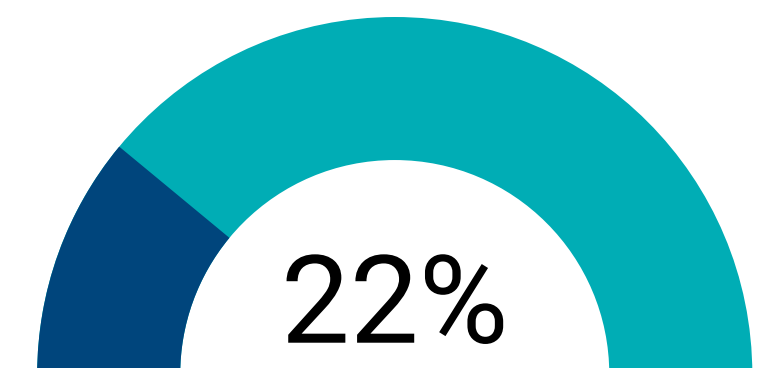
Student Service Receipt among Saturday School Participants (N = 1,012)



Identified as EMLs



Received FARMS Services



Students with IEPs



Findings

Race/ethnicity, EML status, FARMS status, and IEP status were all analyzed for the Saturday School sample. Just slightly under half (45.4%, $n = 459$) of Saturday School participants identified as Black and/or African American and 23.5% ($n = 238$) were Hispanic/Latino. Just slightly under a quarter were Asian (20.1%, $n = 203$). White (7.0%, $n = 71$), Two or More Races (3.7%, $n = 37$), and All Other Student Groups (0.4%, $n = 4$) made up less than 15%. In total, 69.3% ($n = 701$) were identified as underrepresented and 30.7% ($n = 311$) were identified as not underrepresented. For service groups among Saturday School participants, 22.3% ($n = 226$) were identified as EMLs, 54.7% ($n = 554$) received FARMS Services, and 22.0% ($n = 223$) had IEPs.



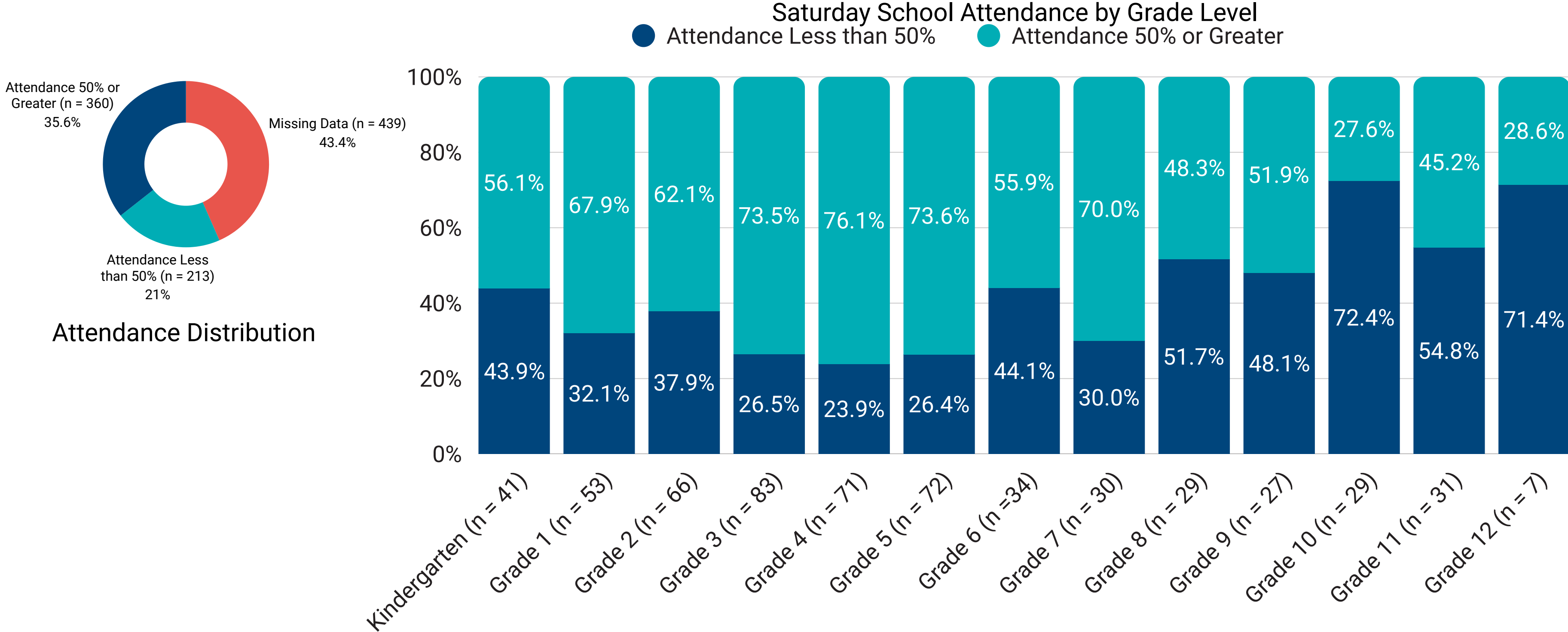
Evaluation Questions 2 & 3 Limitations and Caution for Interpreting Findings

Several data limitations affected the interpretation of these findings, primarily driven by substantial missing Saturday School attendance data (43.4% missing). Because missing data obscured actual attendance, it was not possible to distinguish between students who actively participated and those who merely enrolled. Consequently, dosage effects were also not measurable. It was also not possible to completely isolate the program's true effect when comparing participants to the control group as the Saturday School group may have had students who have not attended a single session.



Evaluation Question 2

Saturday School Attendance Levels



Findings

Many Saturday School participants had missing data (43.4%, $n = 439$) on their attendance record. As such, they were removed from further analyses. This remains a major limitation in the data. Although they were registered as a student of Saturday School, there was no indicator on their amount of attendance. For those that did have attendance data, Saturday School attendance was 50% or Greater for over 50% for every grade for Saturday School students in elementary school. Middle school students followed a similar pattern, except for students in Grade 8, where 51.7% attended less than 50% of Saturday School sessions. For high school participants, the majority of students attended less than 50% of Saturday School sessions.



Evaluation Question 2

Differences in Attendance by Race/Ethnicity & Student Service Receipt

Saturday School Attendance by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Receipt Groups

Demographic Category/Measure	Group	Less than 50% (Percentage)	Less than 50% (n)	50% or Greater (Percentage)	50% or Greater (n)
Race/Ethnicity	Asian (n = 150)	35.3	53	64.7	97
	Black and/or African American (n = 215)	36.3	78	63.7	137
	Hispanic/Latino (n = 130)	37.7	49	62.3	81
	Two or More Races	-	-	60.9	14
	White (n = 51)	47.1	24	52.9	27
	All Other Student Groups (-)	≤5.0	-	≥95.0	-
Underrepresented Group Status	Not Underrepresented (n = 224)	38.4	86	61.6	138
	Underrepresented (n = 349)	36.4	127	63.6	222
EML Status	No (n = 436)	39.7	173	60.3	263
	Yes (n = 137)	29.2	40	70.8*	97
FARMS Status	No (n = 272)	36.0	98	64.0	174
	Yes (n = 301)	38.2	115	61.8	186
IEP Status	No (n = 446)	38.1	170	61.9	276
	Yes (n = 127)	33.9	43	66.1	84

Note. Differences between EML status groups were significant at the $p < .05$ level were indicated with a asterisk. In keeping with MCPS policy, the following suppression rules are applied to tables containing student data to protect student privacy. N's between 1 and 10 are reported as "--"; N's of 0 are reported as "N/A"; percentages of less than or equal to 5% are reported as ≤5.0%; and percentages greater or equal to 95% are reported as ≥95.0%.



Findings

Using a series of Chi-Square tests, with follow-up cell comparisons, using Bonferroni adjustments, we determined the relationship between demographic and service receipt variables with level of attendance. There were no statistical differences in levels of attendance between those of different races and ethnicities. When groups were dichotomized into not underrepresented and underrepresented, there were still no differences of percentages in level of attendance between those who attended less than 50% and those who attended 50% or more sessions.

For service groups, there was a statistically significant difference observed in level of attendance for those identified as EMLs (70.8%) compared to those who were not (60.3%). There were no differences between among the groups for FARMS status and IEP status.



Evaluation Question 3

Saturday School Participants compared to Comparison Group

Adjusted Saturday School and Matched Comparison Group Means by Grade Level

Elementary			Secondary		
School Level/ Measure	Matched Comparison Group (Mean)	Saturday School Participants (Mean)	School Level/Measure	Matched Comparison Group (Mean)	Saturday School Participants (Mean)
Grades K–Grade 2			Grades 6–8		
DIBELS Composite Score	464.2	465.3	MAP-R RIT Score	213.3	213.3
MAP-M RIT Score	178.1	178.9	MAP-M RIT Score	225.3	224.2
Grades 3–5			MCAP ELA/L Scale Score	745.4	744.9
MAP-R RIT Score	197.9	197.8	MCAP Math Scale Score	734.7	734.1
MAP-M RIT Score	211.5	210.7	MP4 MPA	3.2	3.2
MCAP ELA/L Scale Score	742.9	743.1	Grades 9–12		
MCAP Math Scale Score	742.5	742.1	MP4 MPA	2.8	2.9



Findings

As stated in the Methodology section, comparisons between Saturday School participants and a matched comparison group were conducted with a series of outcome measures depending on the grade level in which a student was a part of.

For Kindergarten through Grade 2, the Spring DIBELS composite score and the Spring MAP-M RIT Score were used for outcome variables in the ANCOVAs. No differences were found in the adjusted means between the matched comparison group and Saturday School Participants. For students in Grade 3 through 5, no differences were found between groups for the spring measurements of the MAP-R RIT Score, MAP-M RIT Score, MCAP ELA/L Score, and MCAP Math Score. This same trend occurred for the comparison of groups within Grades 6–8, with the addition of the outcome measure of MP4 MPA. In addition, no differences were observed on MP4 MPA between the Saturday School participants and the matched comparison group. Since none of the analyses were significant, no follow-up analyses were conducted.



Conclusion

Key Findings and Limitations

Demographic and Service Receipt Results (Evaluation Questions 1 & 2)

Of the students who attended Saturday School, 65.3% attended elementary school, 16.8% attended middle school, and 17.7% attended high school. Those of underrepresented status (Black and/or African American, Hispanic/Latino, All Other Student Groups) made up 69.3% of Saturday School participants. For service groups, 22.3% of Saturday School participants were identified as EML, 54.7% received FARMS services, and 22% had IEPs. A higher percentage of those in Kindergarten–Grade 5 attended 50% or more Saturday School sessions, while those in Grades 6-8 ranged from 48.3% to 70.0% attending 50% or more sessions. This is in line with program expectations. Those in Grades 9–12 had the lowest percentages of attending more than 50% of Saturday School sessions, with only 51.9% of Grade 9 students attending 50% or more Saturday School sessions. Comparing racial/ethnic groups and service groups, there were only differences in those who are identified as Emergent Multilingual Learners and those who were not on levels of Saturday School attendance. All other comparisons were non-significant.

Summary of Key Findings of Effectiveness (Evaluation Question 3)

The goal of the outcome evaluation was to determine the impact of the Saturday School program on key indicators of academic achievement. Using a series of ANCOVAs, the average DIBELS composite scores, MAP-M RIT scores, MAP-R RIT scores, MCAP ELA/L scale scores, MCAP Math scale scores, and MP4 MPA for the 2024-2025 school year were compared between Saturday School participants and the matched comparison group. There were no statistical differences found between Saturday School participants and the matched comparison groups across all the measures for all grade levels. Additional analyses were conducted using level of attendance but there was a large amount of missing data which prevented comparisons between those of different levels of attendance.

Limitations and Caution for Interpretation of Findings

Ultimately, missing attendance data for 43.4% of Saturday School participants significantly limited the conclusions that can be drawn regarding the program's overall effectiveness. Because the data cannot distinguish between those who are registered only and active participants, comparing Saturday School students to a control group risks misclassifying unserved students as participants. Additionally, this missing information prevents dosage analyses, which would include analyzing outcomes for students attending under 50% versus 50% or more of the sessions to determine whether higher engagement yielded better results. Future evaluations must implement rigorous attendance tracking to isolate the program's true impact and ensure accurate comparisons.



Recommendations



Establish Complete Session-Level Attendance Tracking

For future years of Saturday School implementation, program staff should record attendance for every session. This would allow for every student to have a detailed record and allow for researchers to determine, in more granularity, the effects of the number of attended sessions with academic outcomes. A centralized methodology of recording student attendance would make tracking much easier in the future across all Saturday School sites as data would be uniform. The tracking of attendance can help analyses two-fold. It can help distinguish the group of Saturday School participants from those who did not attend. In addition, the effects of the amount of attended sessions could be analyzed. It would be possible to attribute the level of attendance with changes in academic performance. Thorough records would allow for more flexibility in analyses and provide greater detail when investigating the effects of Saturday School. In other words, program staff should record attendance for every session and maintain a longitudinal student-level record of eligible sessions, sessions attended, and percentage of sessions attended.

Improve Secondary-Student Attendance and Retention

Saturday School achieved strong engagement among elementary students, with over 50% attending more than half of all available sessions. While continuous attendance is less critical for older students, improving middle and high school participation remains a crucial growth opportunity. Aligning with the program's focus on college and career readiness, expanding outreach to these older cohorts will maximize long-term impact during key academic transition years. Moving forward, program evaluations should analyze grade-level attendance patterns to understand and address the root causes of lower participation among older students.



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