Photo: Nowell Academy

The Beyond Engage New England Initiative

2022–23 School Profiles

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🗘 SRI

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Introduction

The Barr Foundation's Engage New England (ENE) initiative is an effort to develop exemplary demonstration high schools that serve students who are currently off track to graduate. Grounded in the tenets of positive youth development, the ENE initiative aims to support new or redesigned schools to use competencybased approaches to improve the educational and life outcomes of students who have not experienced success in traditional school settings.

The Barr Foundation invested in three cohorts of grantees, with the first cohort funded in 2017–18. In 2022, the foundation launched the second phase of the initiative, Beyond ENE, which now includes five continuing grantees: Chelsea Opportunity Academy, Evolve Academy, Holyoke



Opportunity Academy, PROMISE College and Career Academy, and Sheila Skip Nowell Leadership Academy.

Each grantee receives technical assistance from Springpoint, a national organization that facilitates innovative school model design and implementation. Springpoint's Beyond ENE support focuses on helping grantees deepen the work begun under the ENE initiative with the goal of developing a strong instructional core supported by an intensive academic advisory model, postsecondary planning, and community partnerships. SRI Education is the research partner for this initiative.

In this brief, we provide a profile of each Beyond ENE grantee that describes its student population during the 2022–23 school year as well as select progress metrics.¹ These profiles draw from school administrative data and student survey data. PROMISE Academy joined a year later than the other four grantees and is consequently not included in this profile.

¹ The SRI research team engaged in a collaborative development process with Beyond ENE school leaders to identify progress metrics to inform continuous improvement that would work across the varied Beyond ENE student populations (see <u>Equitably Measuring Student Progress to High School Graduation</u>). For metric definitions, see Appendix A.



The grantees profiled in this brief each serve students who are off track to graduate; however, there is important variation in their student populations, with implications for schools' structures and supports (Exhibit 1). For example, most students at Chelsea Opportunity Academy are age 18 or older and within 2 years of graduation, whereas Evolve Academy enrolls a larger proportion of students who are under age 16 or under age 18 and far from graduation.

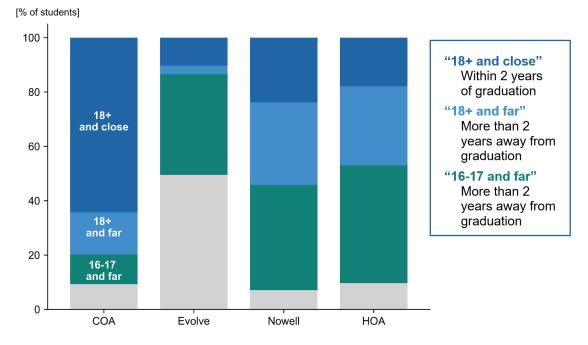
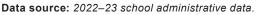


Exhibit 1. Beyond ENE Off-track Population Segments



Note: The classification of segments of the off-track population is modeled after <u>this EY Parthenon report</u>. In this report, students who are under age 16 or who are 16-17 and within 2 years of graduation are not classified as off track but may be at risk for becoming off track.



Chelsea Opportunity Academy



Chelsea Opportunity Academy (COA) is an alternative high school located in Chelsea, Massachusetts. It is part of the Chelsea Public Schools district and was launched in 2018– 19 with support from the ENE initiative. Guidance counselors refer students to COA who are over age and under-credited, who are struggling at the district's comprehensive high school, or who have been unenrolled after being absent for 15 days. COA serves a large proportion of newcomer students, who have been in the United States for less than 3 years. During the 2022–23 school year, COA served 169 students. Approximately 80% of COA students were over age 18. Of the students over age 18, 74% were within 2 years of graduation ("old and close") and 26% were more than 2 years from graduation ("old and far").



Student Demographics

In 2022–23, most COA students identified as Hispanic/Latinx and White, and there were few Black/ African American (2%) and Asian/ Pacific Islander (1%) students (Exhibit 2). Seventy percent of the students were male and most were classified as English Learners; Spanish was the predominant second language. One in six students received special education services.

Exhibit 2. Student Body Composition (*n* = 169)

Hispanic 95%	/Latinx	
White 97%		
Male 70%		Female 30%
English I 73%	_earner	Not English Learner 27%
	Not Special Education 86%	

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

Only 10% of COA student survey resondents reported having a parent who completed any postsecondary education, whereas 38% reported having a parent who completed high school, 32% reported having a parent who did not graduate high school, and an additional 20% were unsure of the highest level of formal education their parents attained. Two thirds of the survey respondents had consistent housing, and close to a fourth had temporary or no housing (Exhibit 3). The majority of respondents worked more than 20 hours a week. Of the survey respondents, 6% reported having children of their own.

Exhibit 3. Housing, Employment, and Parenting Status

Housing status - (n=80)	Cons housi 62%			Temporary or no housing 23%		Prefer not to say 15%
Employment status - (n=81)	Works 54%	> 20h per week		No paid job 20%	Prefe 20%	er not to say
Parenting status - (n=80)	6 % [*]	Do not have children 90%				4%

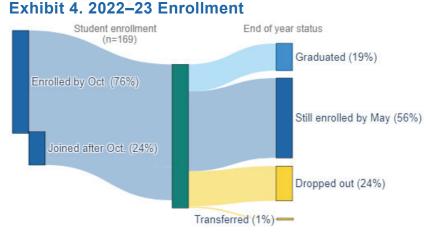
^{*} Have children

Data source: March 2023 student survey. The response rate for COA was 63%.





Of the 169 COA students enrolled during the 2022–23 school year, 76% were enrolled at the beginning of the fall semester and 24% joined throughout the year (Exhibit 4). Overall, 75% of COA students were either still enrolled or had graduated by the end of the school year, while 24% were reported as having dropped out. Only two students transferred to other schools.



Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data. **Note:** Nine students are not classified as "enrolled" or "joined" because they were missing initial enrollment dates.

According to the number of credits students had accumulated at the beginning of the school year, half the students were in the equivalent of 11th grade and almost a fourth were in the equivalent of 12th grade (Exhibit 5). Even though the majority of students were in 11th or 12th grade, fewer than a third of students had been at COA for more than 1 year, reflecting the fact that students enroll at COA after starting high school elsewhere. See Appendix A for grade-equivalent calculations.

Exhibit 5. Years Enrolled and Grade Equivalents



Data source: 2022-23 school administrative data.

Note: Grade equivalents are based on credits, not years in high school. Therefore, there is no direct relationship between grade equivalents and years enrolled.

Among those students who were enrolled in COA for the full 2022– 23 school year, students accrued 3.4 credits, on average, which is equivalent to 0.43 years of schooling. Approximately a third of students earned their target number of credits. For seniors, being on target is defined as earning the remaining credits necessary to graduate; for non-seniors, it is defined as earning at least 1 year's worth of credits. Moreover, 5% of non-seniors accrued more than 1.5 year's worth of credits in 1 year, accelerating their path toward graduation.

32% of COA students were on target for credits earned



Senior Class Profile

67% of seniors graduated with a HS diploma The 1-year graduation rate for the 27 COA students who began the 2022–23 school year as seniors was 67%.² Of the students who did not graduate, 45% were still enrolled and 55% dropped out. An additional 9 students graduated who did not start the year as seniors, or 28% of the 32 total graduates.

Postsecondary planning activities, offered to graduating students at COA, included support completing financial aid applications and applying to colleges or technical schools. Almost half of COA's graduating students completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Half applied to at least one postsecondary institution, a fifth applied to technical schools, and more than a fourth applied to 2-year colleges (Exhibit 6). No students took the SAT, and very few (3%) applied to 4-year colleges.



Exhibit 6. Graduating Students' Postsecondary Planning (n = 32)

Completed FAFSA Did n 44%			ot complete FAFSA		
Did not take SAT 100%					
Applied to at least 50%	one post	secondary instit	ution	Did not apply 50%	
Applied to tech. school 19%	Did not apply 81%				
Applied to 2-year college 28%Did not apply 72%					
* Did not apply to 4-y 3% 97%	* Did not apply to 4-year college 3% 97%				

* Applied to 4-year college

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

² This metric only considers students who began the school year as seniors as defined by the number of credits. Students who transferred to another school midyear are not included in the senior graduation rate.



Evolve Academy

Evolve Academy is a program within Durfee High School in Fall River, Massachusetts. It launched in 2019–20 as a program within the district's alternative high school with support from the ENE initiative. When it started, most students came from the alternative high school. Evolve moved to Durfee High School in 2021–22, which facilitated enrollment of students from the comprehensive high school. On average, Evolve enrolls a younger student population than the other schools in the Beyond ENE initiative. Evolve enrolled 99 students during the 2022–23 school year. Approximately 60% of the students are considered "young and far"—ages 16–17 and 2 or more years away from graduation.

Student Demographics

In 2022–23, most Evolve students identified as White and non-Hispanic/Latinx (Exhibit 7), and there were some Black/African American (15%), multiracial (8%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (2%) students. There were slightly more male than female students, and a few identified as nonbinary (2%). Very few students were classified as English Learners, and more

African White American 75% 15% Hispanic 16% Male Female 53% 45% Not English Learner EL 5% **Special Education** 37%

Exhibit 7. Student Body Composition (*n* = 97)

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

than one in three students received special education services.

On the Evolve student survey, approximately 25% of respondents reported that neither parent graduated from high school; almost half had at least one parent who completed high school; and 17% had a parent with a 2-year, 4-year, or graduate degree. Most respondents reported having consistent housing, but close to 10% had temporary or no housing (Exhibit 8). Although almost one in five respondents worked for more than 20 hours a week, most (63%) did not have a paid job. Four percent of respondents reported having children of their own.

Exhibit 8. Housing, Employment, and Parenting Status



* Have children

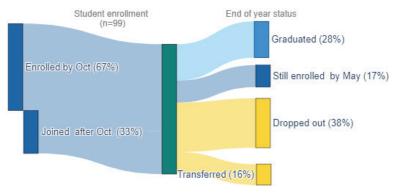
Data source: March 2023 student survey. The response rate for Evolve was 91%.





Of the 99 students enrolled at Evolve during the 2022–23 school year, 67% were enrolled at the beginning of the fall semester and 33% joined throughout the year (Exhibit 9). Slightly less than a half of Evolve students were still enrolled or had graduated by the end of the school year, while 38% were reported as having dropped out of the

Exhibit 9. 2022–23 Enrollment



Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

school. An additional 16% either returned to the Durfee High School general program or transferred to another school.

Most students had been enrolled in Evolve for less than 1 year, a third had been enrolled for 1 to 2 years, and very few had been at the school for more than 2 years (Exhibit 10). According to the number of credits students had accumulated at the beginning of the school year, students were distributed relatively evenly across grade levels, although there were slightly more 9th and 10th graders than 11th and 12th graders. See Appendix A for grade-equivalent calculations.

Exhibit 10. Years Enrolled and Grade Equivalents

Years enrolled (n=99)		1 to 2 yrs 34%	
Grade equivalent (n=97)	10th 35%	11th 20%	12th 18%

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

Note: Grade equivalents are based on credits, not years in high school. Therefore, there is no direct relationship between grade equivalents and years enrolled.

On average, the students enrolled at Evolve for the entire 2022–23 school year accrued 32 credits, equivalent to 1.3 years of schooling. Almost all of these students earned their target number of credits. For seniors, being on target is defined as earning the remaining credits necessary to graduate; for non-seniors, it is defined as earning at least 1 year's worth of credits. Additionally, 40% of non-seniors accrued more than 1.5 years' worth of credits in 1 year, accelerating their path toward graduation.

98% of Evolve students were on target for credits earned



Senior Class Profile

100% of seniors graduated with a HS diploma The 1-year graduation rate for the 17 Evolve students who began the 2022–23 school year as seniors was 100%.³ An additional 11 students who did not start the year as seniors graduated, or 40% of the 28 total graduates.

Graduating students at Evolve were offered postsecondary planning activities that included support completing financial aid applications and applying to colleges or technical schools. Close to a third of Evolve's graduating students completed the FAFSA, but only 1 of 28 students took the SAT. More than half of graduating students applied to at least one postsecondary institution, and although few applied to technical schools or 4-year colleges, a considerable proportion (43%) applied to 2-year colleges (Exhibit 11).



Exhibit 11. Graduating Students' Postsecondary Planning (*n* = 28)

Completed FAFSA 29%	Did not complete FAFSA 64%		Waived 7%		
SAT Did not take SAT 4% 96%					
Applied to at least one postsec 54%	ondary institution	Did not apply 46%			
Did not apply to technic7%93%	Did not apply to technical school 7% 93%				
Applied to 2-year college 43%	Did not app 57%	ly			
Did not apply to 4-year coll	ege				

* Applied to a technical school

† Applied to a 4-year college

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

³ This metric only considers students who began the school year as seniors as defined by the number of credits. Students who transferred to another school midyear are not included in the senior graduation rate.



Holyoke Opportunity Academy (HOA) is an alternative high school in Holyoke, Massachusetts. It is part of the Holyoke Public Schools district and has a mission of serving youth who are not succeeding in traditional high school settings. HOA joined the ENE initiative in 2019. HOA offers three programs to serve students with a diverse set of needs: Success Center, LightHouse Holyoke, and Gateway to College. Success Center is the largest program and the only one involved in the Beyond ENE initiative. Thus, this profile focuses on Success Center only.

Success Center is a combined program for high school students and adult learners and is designed for students who are at least 1 year off track to graduate. In 2022–23, Success Center enrolled 219 students at some point during the school year. For students enrolled in the fall, approximately 50% were ages 16–17 and more than 2 years away from graduation ("young and far"), 20% were over age 18 and within 2 years of graduation ("old and close") and nearly 30% were over age 18 and more than 2 years from graduation ("old and far").

Student Demographics

In 2022–23, most students at HOA Success Center identified as Hispanic/Latinx (Exhibit 12). Some students identified as White (9%), and smaller proportions as Black/African American (5%), Multiracial (3%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (1%) students.⁴ Success Center

Exhibit 12. Student Body Composition (*n* = 219)

Hispanic/Latinx 82%		White 9%	
Male 57%	Female 42%		
English Learner 29%	Not English Learner 71%		
Special Education 39%	Not Special Education 61%		

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

enrolled sligthly more male than female students, and a few students identified as nonbinary (1%). Close to a third of students were classified as English Learners, and almost four in ten received special education services.

On the student survey, only 7% of HOA Success Center students reported having a parent who completed any postsecondary education, 35% reported having parents who completed high school, and almost 40% reported having parents who did not graduate high school. Among the survey respondents, a little over half reported having consistent housing and close to a fifth had temporary or no housing (Exhibit 13). Most respondents did not have a paid job; however, 14% reported working more than 20 hours a week. One of ten respondents had children of their own.

Exhibit 13. Housing, Employment, and Parenting Status

Housing status (n=41)	ousing		Temporary or no housing 22%	Prefer not to say 22%
Employment status (n=42)	Works ≤ 20h 16%	No paid job 60%		Prefer not to say 10%
status - children	o not have hildren 0%			

Data source: March 2023 student survey. HOA response rate was 41%.

⁴ Student demographic data for HOA do not differentiate between race and ethnicity self-identification.



Academic Profile

Two thirds of the 219 students who went to HOA Success Center during the 2022–23 school year were enrolled at the beginning of the fall semester and the remaining joined throughout the year (Exhibit 14). Overall, 75% of the students were either still enrolled or had graduated by the end of the school year, whereas 22% were reported as

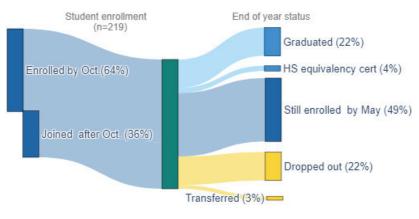


Exhibit 14. 2022–23 Enrollment

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

having dropped out of the school. An additional six students transferred to other schools.

Most of the students at Success Center had been enrolled in the school for less than 1 year, and few had been enrolled for 2 or more years (Exhibit 15). According to the number of credits students had accumulated at the beginning of the school year, most students were in the equivalent of either 9th or 10th grade and only 7% were considered seniors. See Appendix A for grade-equivalent calculations.

Exhibit 15. Years Enrolled and Grade Equivalents

Years		1 to 2	2 to 3	3+
enrolled - <mark>1 yr</mark>		yrs	yrs	yrs
(n=219) 73%		14%	8%	5%
Grade equivalent - <mark>44%</mark> (n=134)	10th 32%	11th 16%		l2th 7%

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

Note: Grade equivalents are based on credits, not years in high school. Therefore, there is no direct relationship between grade equivalents and years enrolled. Some students are not classified in grade equivalents because they were missing initial credits.

On average, students who were enrolled in HOA Success Center for the full 2022–23 school year accrued 29.2 credits, roughly equivalent to 1 year of schooling. Forty-four percent of students earned their target number of credits. For seniors, being on target is defined as earning the remaining credits necessary to graduate; for non-seniors, it is defined as earning at least 1 year's worth of credits. Additionally, a third of non-seniors accrued more than 1.5 years' worth of credits in 1 year, accelerating their path toward graduation.





70% of seniors graduated with a HS diploma At HOA Success Center, the 1-year graduation rate was 70% for the 10 students who began the 2022–23 school year as seniors.⁵ The three seniors who did not graduate were still enrolled at the end of the year. An additional 22 students graduated who did not start the year as seniors, or 46% of the 48 total graduates.

Postsecondary planning activities for graduating students at Success Center included completing financial aid applications and applying to colleges or technical schools. Slightly over half of the graduating students completed the FAFSA, and none took the SAT (Exhibit 16). A fourth of the graduates applied to postsecondary institutions, and most applied to 4-year colleges. Few students applied to technical schools or 2-year colleges.

Exhibit 16. Graduating Students' Postsecondary Planning (*n* = 48)

Complet 56%	ed FAFSA		Did not complete FAFSA 44%			
Did not 100%	Did not take SAT 100%					
Did app 25%	Did applyDid not apply to any postsecondary institutions25%75%					
8%	Did not app 92%	bly to technical school				
	 Did not apply to 2-year college 96% 					
Did apply 17%Did not apply to 4-year college 83%			llege			

* Did apply

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

⁵ This metric only considers students who began the school year as seniors as defined by the number of credits. Students who transferred to another school midyear are not included in the senior graduation rate.



The Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy is a public charter school in Providence, Rhode Island. <u>Nowell's mission</u> is to ensure that "pregnant, parenting and underserved youth graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for success in college, career and family life." Nowell joined the ENE initiative in 2019 and enrolls students via a statewide charter school lottery. Nowell enrolled 198 students during the 2022–23 school year Approximately 39% of students were ages 16–17 and more than 2 years away from graduation ("young and far"), 24% were over age 18 and within 2 years of graduation ("old and close"), and 30% were over age 18 and more than 2 years from graduation ("old and far").



In 2022–23, two thirds of students at Nowell identified as Hispanic/ Latinx, and nearly a quarter identified as Black/ African American (23%; Exhibit 17). There were a few White (9%), Asian/ Pacific Islander (1%) and

Hispanic/Latinx 66%		African American 23%	White 9%
Male 27%	Female 71%		
English Learner 30%	Not English Learner 70%		
Sp. Ed 8% Not Special E 92%	ducation		

Exhibit 17. Student Body Composition (n = 198)

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

Native American/ Alaska Native students (1%).⁶ Most of the students were female, and a few identified as nonbinary (2%). Almost one in three students were classified as English Learners, and very few received special education services (8%).

On the student survey, close to 40% of Nowell students reported having parents who did not graduate from high school, 23% reported having parents who completed high school, and 23% reported having parents who completed any postsecondary education. Of the survey respondents, most (73%) reported having consistent housing, and a fifth had temporary or no housing (Exhibit 18). Twenty-two percent of students worked less than 20 hours a week, and 11% worked more than 20 hours a week. In keeping with Nowell's mission, a third of survey respondents at Nowell had children of their own.

Exhibit 18. Housing, Employment, and Parenting Status

Housing status - Consistent housing 73%			Temporary or no housing 19%	Prefer not to say 8%
Employment status (n=107)	20h ≤ 20h 22%	No paid job 57%		Prefer not to say 10%
Parenting status - Have chi 33% (n=102)	ldren	Do not have childrer 64%	1	

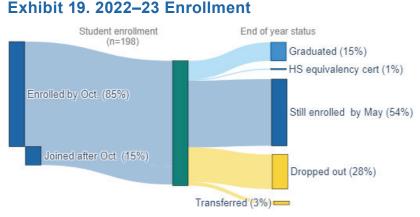
Data source: March 2023 student survey. The response rate for Nowell was 67%.

⁶ Student demographic data for Nowell do not differentiate between race and ethnicity self-identification.





Out of the 198 students who were enrolled at Nowell during the 2022–23 school year, most (85%) were enrolled at the beginning of the fall semester and the remaining joined throughout the year (Exhibit 19). More than two thirds of the students were either still enrolled or had graduated by the end of the school

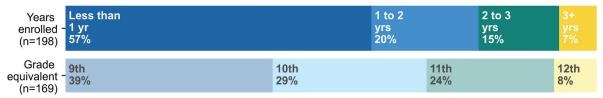


Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

year, while 28% were reported as having dropped out. Six students transferred to other schools before the end of the year.

More than half of the students had been enrolled in Nowell for less than 1 year, and a fifth had been there for 1 to 2 years (Exhibit 20). According to the number of credits students had accumulated at the beginning of the school year, more than a third were in the equivalent of 9th grade and less than a tenth were in the equivalent of 12th grade. See Appendix A for grade-equivalent calculations.

Exhibit 20. Years Enrolled and Grade Equivalents



Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

Note: Grade equivalents are based on credits, not years in high school. Therefore, there is no direct relationship between grade equivalents and years enrolled. Some students are not classified in grade equivalents because they were missing initial credits.

Among those students who were enrolled in Nowell for the full 2022–23 school year, students accrued 5.9 credits, on average, which is equivalent to 1.2 years of schooling. Almost two thirds of these students earned their target number of credits. For seniors, being on target is defined as earning the remaining credits necessary to graduate; for non-seniors, it is defined as earning at least 1 year's worth of credits. Forty percent of non-seniors accrued more than 1.5 years' worth of credits during that school year, an indicator of significant acceleration toward graduation.

63% of Nowell students were on target for credits earned





85% of seniors graduated with a HS diploma The 1-year graduation rate for the 13 Nowell students categorized as seniors at the beginning of the 2022–23 school year was 85%.⁷ One of the two students who did not graduate is still enrolled; the other dropped out. An additional 14 students graduated who did not start the year as seniors, or 48% of the 29 total graduates. One

student who did not start the year as a senior earned a high school equivalency certificate.

Postsecondary planning activities, offered to graduating students at Nowell, included guidance counseling, transition support, assistance with FAFSA renewal and verification, career exploration, leadership development, goal-setting, referrals and letters of recommendations to universities or colleges, and access to paid internships. All of the graduating students at Nowell completed the FAFSA, and two thirds took the SAT. Additionally, all graduates applied to at



least one postsecondary institution, and although few graduates applied to technical schools (17%), all of them applied to 2-year colleges and half applied to 4-year schools (Exhibit 21).

Completed FAFSA 100%				
Took the SAT 66%		Did not take SAT 34%		
Applied to at least one postsecondary institution 100%				
Did apply 17%	Did not apply to technical school 83%			
Applied to 2-year college 100%				
Applied to 4-year college 48%		Did not apply to 4-year college 52%		

Exhibit 21. Graduating Students' Postsecondary Planning (*n*=29)

Data source: 2022–23 school administrative data.

⁷ This metric only considers students who began the school year as seniors as defined by the number of credits. Students who transferred to another school midyear are not included in the senior graduation rate.



Appendix A

SRI Education engaged in a collaborative development process with Beyond ENE school leaders in spring and summer 2022 to identify measures of progress toward graduation and graduation rates that are tailored to the unique paths of their students (Exhibit A1). We will not be able to calculate the single-year entry cohort graduation rate or extended engagement rate until 2025.

Exhibit A1. Definitions of Academic Profile Metrics

Metrics	Sample			
Credit accumulation				
 Average 1-year credit accumulation "On-target" credit accumulation: Percentage of students who meet either of the following criteria: For seniors: earned the remaining credits required for graduation For non-seniors: earned at least 1 year's worth of credits Accelerated credit accumulation: Percentage of students earning more than 1 year's worth of credits 	 Includes students enrolled as of October 1 Excludes students who drop out or transfer midyear 			
ne-year graduation rate				
 One-year graduation rate with a high school diploma 	 All students who begin the school year as "seniors," defined by number of credits Does not include students who transfer in or out midyear Includes students who drop out 			
ngle-year entry cohort graduation rate (and extended engagement rate)				
• Three-year cohort graduation rate Supplementary metric: Three-year cohort extended engagement rate	 All students who first enroll in a given school year (at any point during the year) are included in the rates 3 years later Does not include students who transfer to another school Includes students who drop out 			



Grade-Equivalent Calculations

We categorized students into grade-level equivalents by the number of credits they had at the beginning of the school year, not by the number of years they had been enrolled in high school. Exhibit A2 summarizes the grade-level equivalent calculations for each Beyond ENE school described in this brief.

Grade-Level Equivalent	Chelsea Opportunity Academy	Nowell Leadership Academy	Evolve Academy	Holyoke Opportunity Academy
9 th	Credits < 8	Credits < 5	Credits < 25	Credits < 30
10 th	Credits 8 to 15.9	Credits 5 to 9.9	Credits 25 to 49.9	Credits 30 to 59.9
11 th	Credits 16 to 23.9	Credits 10 to 14.9	Credits 50 to 74.9	Credits 60 to 89.9
12 th	Credits ≥ 24	Credits ≥ 15	Credits ≥ 75	Credits ≥ 90





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Boston, Barr focuses regionally and selectively engages nationally, working in partnership with nonprofits, foundations, the public sector, and civic and business leaders to elevate the arts, advance solutions for climate change, and connect all students to success in high school and beyond.



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