

JusticeEd

Year 4 Progress Update
2021-2022



National Center
for Youth Law

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	Our Vision	
4	The JusticeEd Initiative	
5	Who We Have Served	
8	What We Have Learned	
11	Year 4 Outcomes	
19	Continued Covid-19 Pandemic Impact	
20	Concluding Thoughts	
22	Endnotes	



OUR VISION

The National Center for Youth Law (NCYL) envisions a world in which every child thrives and has a full and fair opportunity to achieve the future they envision for themselves.



The JusticeEd Initiative

JusticeEd seeks to improve secondary and post-secondary outcomes for Santa Clara County's court-involved youth through collaborative systems change and the implementation of evidence-based, student-centered supports. Through JusticeEd:

- Court-involved youth receive coordinated supports from JusticeEd staff, teachers, support personnel, advocates, and caregivers that include education planning services that promote youth academic success.
- Parents, family members, mentors, and other adult advocates receive information, coaching, and training to help them self-actualize as supporters and champions.
- System and community leaders collaborate on the development of policy and practices that uplift the voices of court-involved youth and ensure equitable opportunities.
- Teachers and support personnel receive recognition, are connected and engage in collaborative support for court-involved youth.

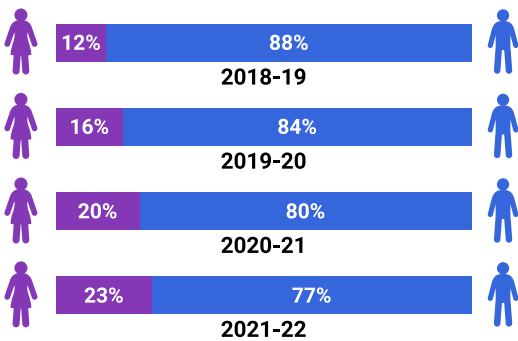
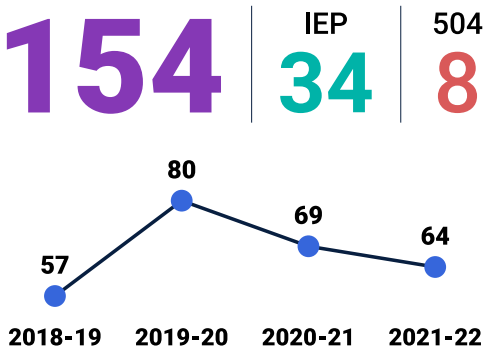
WHO WE HAVE SERVED

Program participant demographics and program outcomes are assessed for the four academic years between 2018-2019 (Year 1) and 2021-2022 (Year 4) using data from EdTeamConnect, NCYL’s internal case management system, and DataZone’s Student Data Warehouse.

JusticeEd Participants

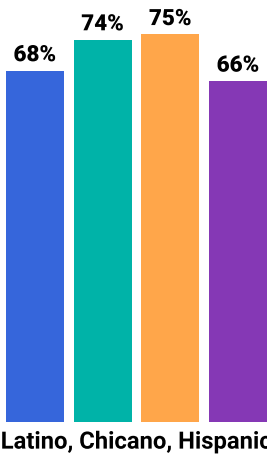
JusticeEd has proudly served **154**¹ court-involved youth since the program launched in July of 2018.

Throughout the four years of operation, our participants have represented diverse backgrounds. Twenty-two percent of students had an Individual Education Plan² (IEP) and 5% of students had 504 Plans.³



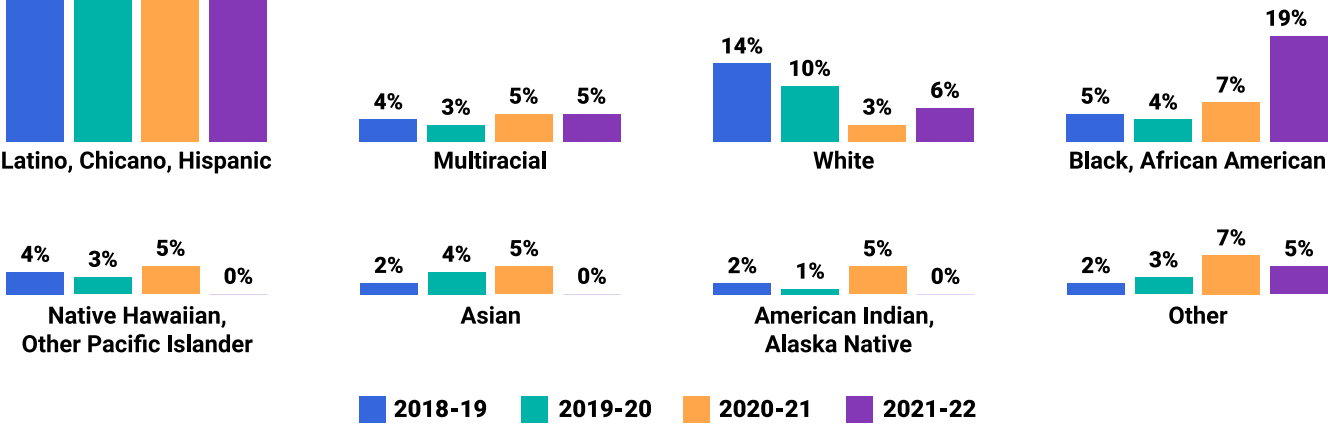
Gender

The proportion of female participants in each cohort has gradually increased over the past four years.



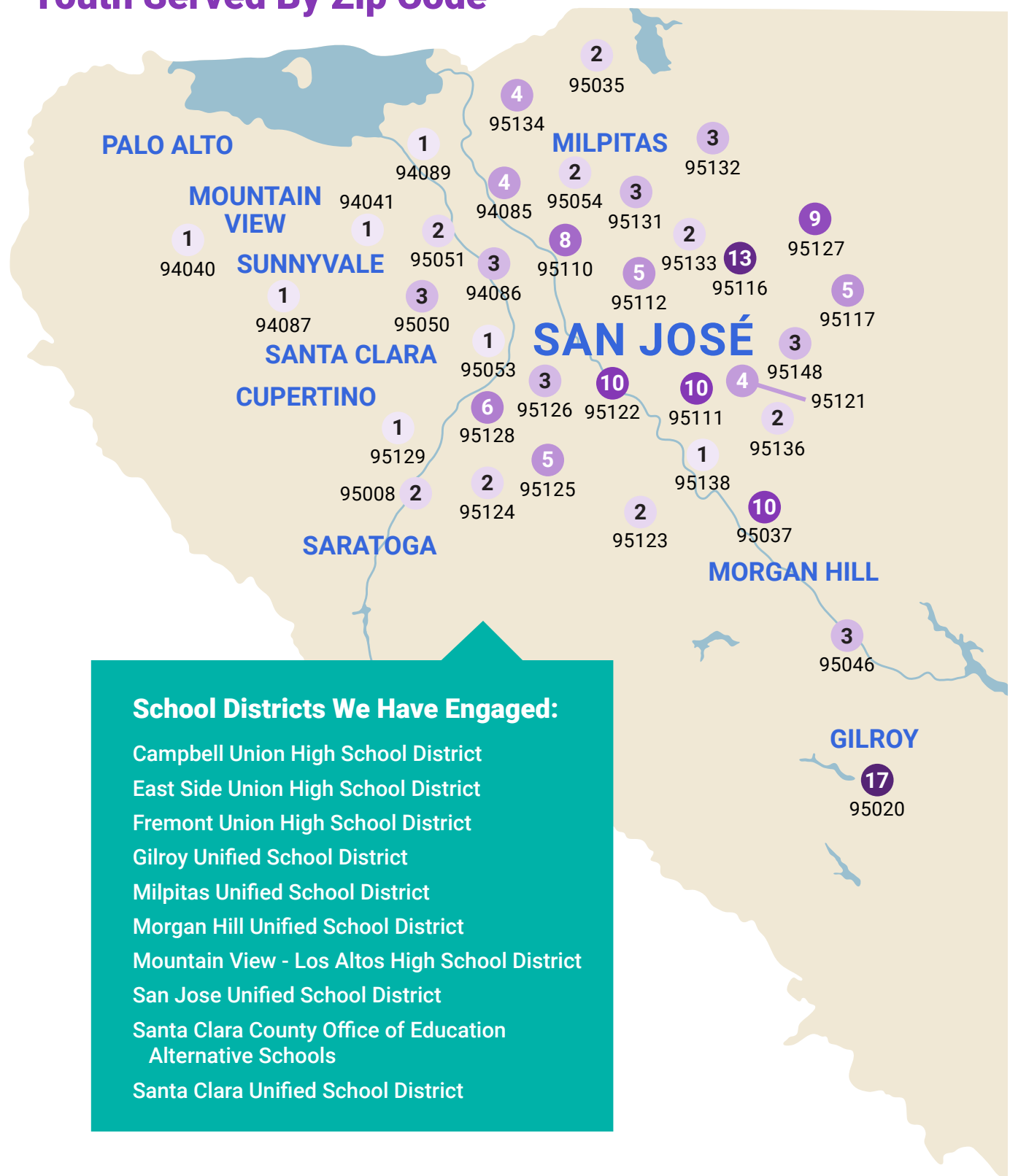
Race and Ethnicity

Over the past four years of JusticeEd programming, the majority of participants have been Hispanic or Latino. In Year 4, we saw an increase in the proportion of Black and African American participants, making up 19% of Year 4’s cohort.



Where We Have Served

Youth Served By Zip Code



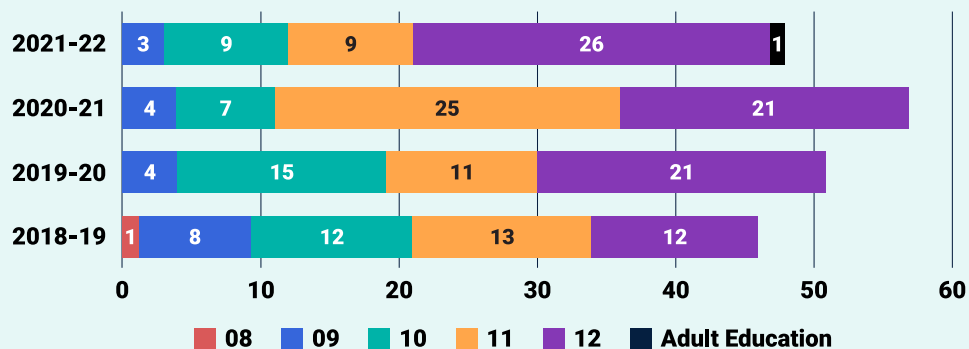
Student Enrollments by School Type (All Four Years)

Adult School	1
Alternative Charter School—County Office of Education	17
Alternative School in District	69
Alternative School—County Office of Education	14
Comprehensive High School	62
Court School	30

Enrollment counts of JusticeEd students by school type across all four years of programming shows the most common types of schools attended by JusticeEd youth to be Alternative Schools (in District) and Comprehensive High Schools.

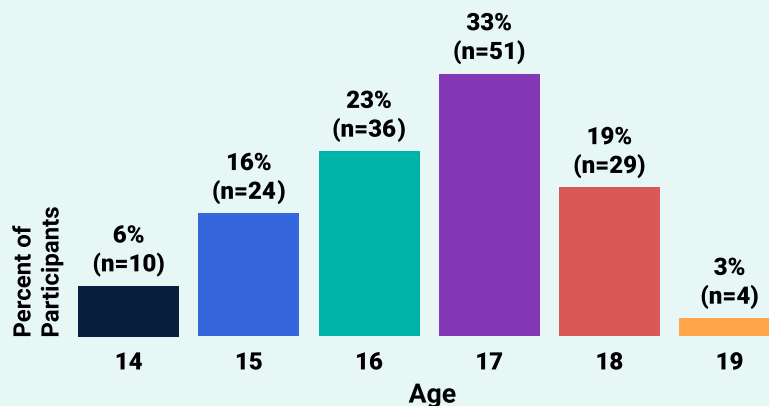
Grade Levels - Student Count by Year

Most program participants were in 10th - 12th grade.



Age at Program Entry

Across all four years of programming, participants entered JusticeEd between the ages of 14 and 19, the average age at program entry being between 16 and 17.





WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

After four years of data and evaluation, we are proud that data is showing our program is having a positive impact on the lives and academic outcomes of the students with whom we work.

When comparing findings from Year 1, Year 2, and Year 4 reports, positive trends are sustained over the course of all reporting periods. While working with JusticeEd, students have continued to...

- ... report positive experiences and social-emotional learning through their interactions with Education Liaisons.
- ... experience reductions in suspensions and school discipline.
- ... have increased rates of credit attainment.

In diving deeper, we see that our greatest asset is the relationships we build with our students and families. In looking at our quantitative data, evaluators found a positive correlation between the frequency of interactions between Education Liaisons and their students and the number of goals young people set for themselves. Though goal setting may sound simple, many of our students struggle with this task or may be identifying a goal for the first time in their life. Through the trust we build with our students, we work to develop this life skill and build understanding of how setting goals are foundational to achieving success. Additionally, we work closely with parents and students in navigating the challenges and barriers within the education system. During qualitative interviews,

evaluators asked students to reflect on their experience working with Education Liaisons and what they have found most helpful. Each year, the response is the same – the first thing they mention is their relationship with the Education Liaison and the support they felt along the way.

Although we see progress in some areas of students' academic outcomes, other areas like attendance have persisted and remain challenging. For many of our students, reengaging in school with consistent frequency after semesters and sometimes even years of disconnection is extremely difficult to do in a short period of time, even with the support of an Education Liaison. Barriers like a lack of consistent transportation or safe passage to school, prior negative experiences or feeling stigmatized on campuses, mental health and substance challenges, and general feelings of hopelessness make it hard for students to show up day-to-day. The challenge of attendance then feeds into the disparities we see in grades and grade point average (GPA), leaving many

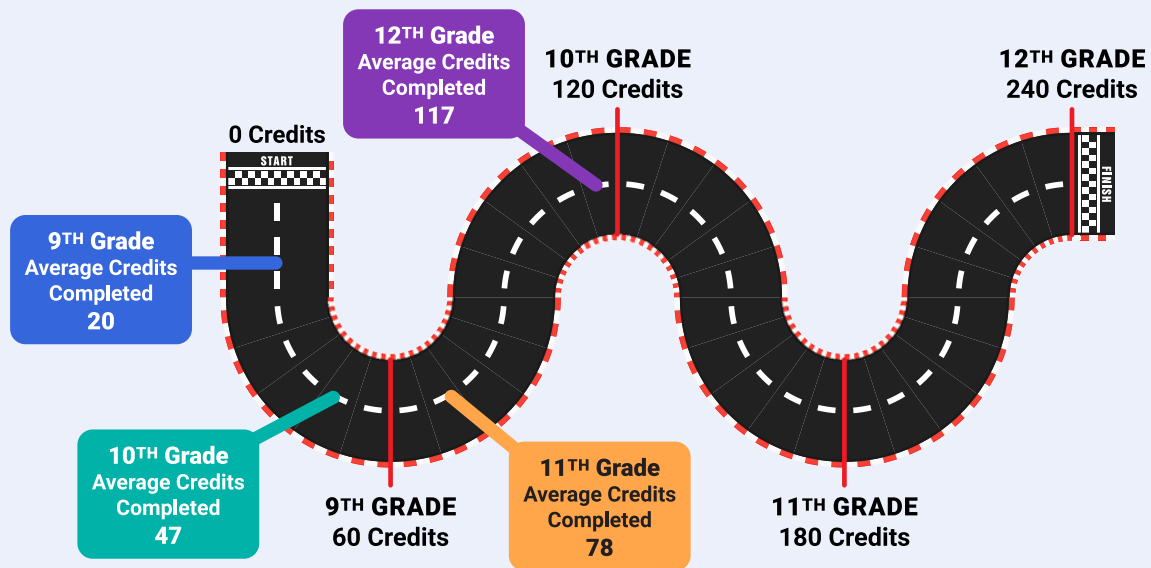
of our students academically behind and delayed in graduation. Despite this, an area with a bright spot seems to be within credit accumulation. While working with Education Liaisons, students continue to accumulate credits despite low attendance, pushing them closer to the graduation goal.

To further understand the impact of our efforts, we hope to expand our evaluation of student progress post-program and assess long-term outcomes. This will allow us to continue to learn about the areas where we are most effective, understand where potential limitations may be, and continue to understand the experience of justice-involved students.

We hope that our findings can serve the community of practice beyond the JusticeEd Initiative and serve as a source of information as we all work together to determine how best to support our students in achieving their academic goals long term.



The Challenges Our Youth Face

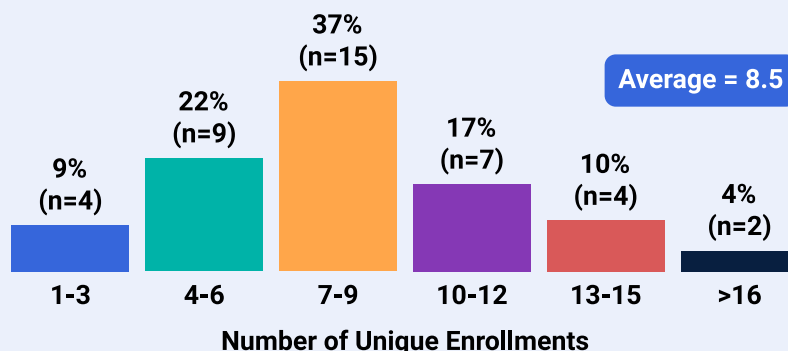


Credit Completion at Program Entry

On average, JusticeEd students' credit completion rates at program entry are behind the credit progress expected for their grade level.⁴ At program entry, 88% of students are considered not on track to graduate high school in four years.

4-Year School Mobility Rates

Our youth have experienced frequent school mobility.⁵ Sixty-eight percent of students experienced seven or more enrollments during the last four years. The distribution of unique school enrollment counts ranged from one student with one unique enrollment, to one student with 21 unique enrollments.



YEAR 4 OUTCOMES

We partnered with the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) to evaluate JusticeEd Year 4 outcomes. Demographic information, enrollment records, and outcome data for current and former JusticeEd participants was extracted from the SCCOE's Student Data Warehouse, DataZone. Goal data, program participation, graduation records, and transcript data was pulled from EdTeamConnect (ETC), NCYL's internal case management system.

DataZone







DataZone's Student Data Warehouse is used by 47 districts across five counties and brings educational data to interagency systems. The Student Data Warehouse is improving collaborative support for Santa Clara County's most at-risk students. Schools and districts use DataZone Analytics to quickly gain insights into student need and system effectiveness, and community partnerships are strengthened by the use of shared data via the Data Extract program and DataZone's interagency applications such as FosterVision and Service Link.

EdTeamConnect

EdTeamConnect (ETC) is a web-based educational case management platform developed by NCYL. Education Liaisons use the tool to manage their work supporting students and to facilitate the multidisciplinary teaming process. EdTeamConnect contains education related information. Education plans that include goals and activities specific to academics, social-emotional development, school and community engagement, peer relationships, and meaningful connections with education champions are kept in ETC and maintained by Education Liaisons.



To assess changes in the education outcomes of our juvenile justice-involved youth over the four years of JusticeEd programming, we used the outcome metrics shown in the scorecard below. In particular, we looked at youth attendance, suspensions, expulsions, credit completion, school stability, and GPA. The scorecard reflects a wide range of some of our accomplishments and areas of growth. During Year 4, participants improved credit completion and demonstrated stabilization of school enrollments – both of which are critical indicators of high school diploma attainment.

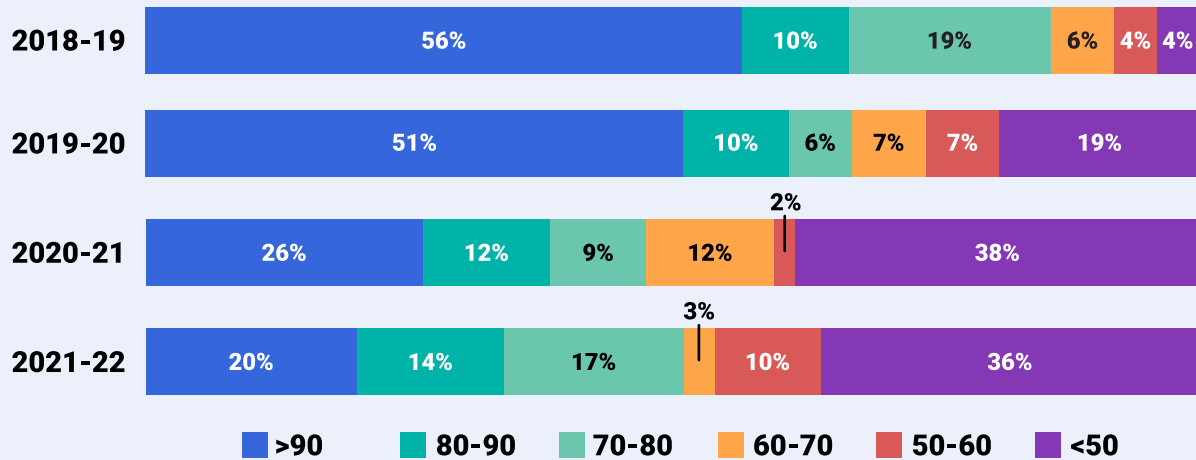
Outcome Metric ⁶	4-Year Trend*
Attendance <i>Target Goal: Participants maintain an average daily attendance (ADA) of 91.5% and above.</i> Metric: Proportion of students meeting this goal or improving their ADA rate by 5% from the prior year.	
Reduce Suspension <i>Target Goal: Participants have 0 suspensions.</i> Metric: Proportion of participants with 0 suspensions during the year of participation.	
Reduce Expulsion <i>Target Goal: Participants have 0 expulsions.</i> Metric: Proportion of participants with 0 expulsions during the year of participation.	
Credit Completion <i>Target Goal: Participants have increase credit completion rate.</i> Metric: Proportion of participants who increased their rate of credit completion from the year before. <i>Data only available for academic years 2019-20 through 2021-22</i>	
School Stability <i>Target Goal: Participants are enrolled in exactly 1 school for the duration of the academic year.</i> Metric: Proportion of participants who were enrolled in 1 school during an academic year.	
GPA Performance <i>Target Goal: Participants maintain a GPA of 2.0 or above.</i> Metric: Proportion of participants who maintained a GPA of 2.0 or higher.	

*The 4-year trend represents the direction of the change from Year 1 to Year 4 of the specified metric for each outcome.



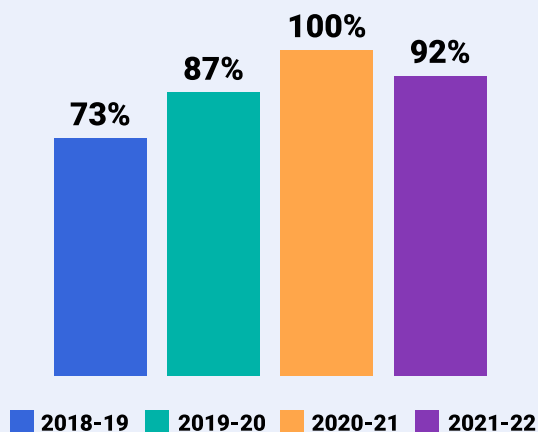
Yearly Percentage of Youth by Average Daily Attendance Range

Attendance is broken down by year to display the distribution of attendance by varying average daily attendance (ADA) ranges. Absenteeism has increased over the past four years, with the proportion of students maintaining an ADA of above 90% steadily decreasing since 2018-2019.



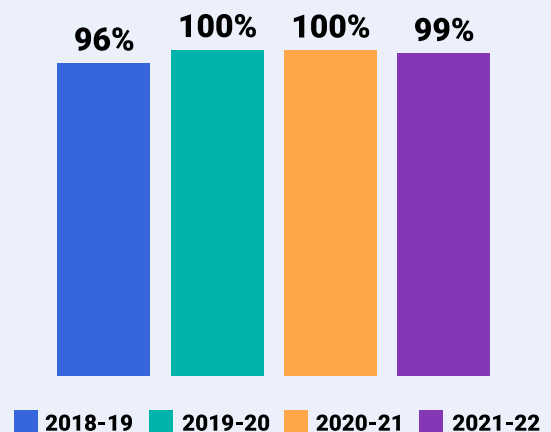
Suspension Rates

Proportion of participants with zero suspensions.



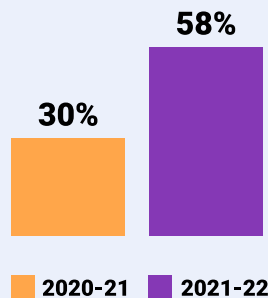
Expulsion Rates

Proportion of participants with zero expulsions.



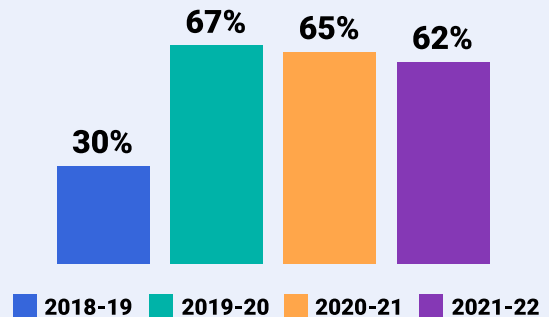
Credit Completion

Proportion of participants whose percent of credits completed increased from the prior academic year.



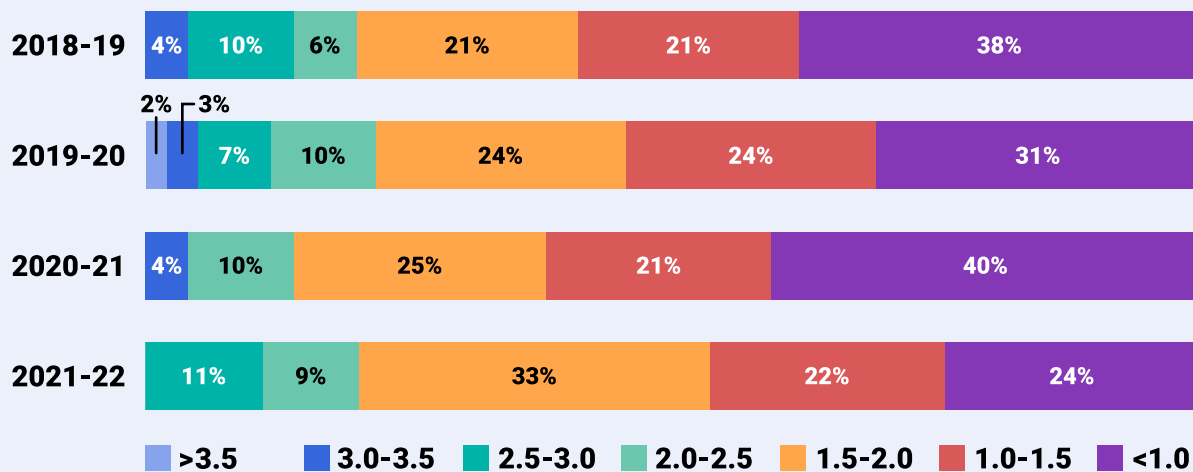
School Stability

Proportion of participants who were enrolled in only one school that academic year.



Yearly Percentage of Youth by GPA Performance Range

The distribution of program participants' GPA Performance is fairly similar across the four years of programming, with the majority of students having a GPA below 2.0.



Graduation Rates

To examine graduation rates, we looked at all current and former JusticeEd participants with at least one 12th-grade enrollment record found. Graduation records were found for 45% of these students.⁷ These findings indicate that 45% of JusticeEd students graduated high school in 4-6 years. Approximately 73% of graduates graduated in 4 years, and 24% graduated in 5 years.

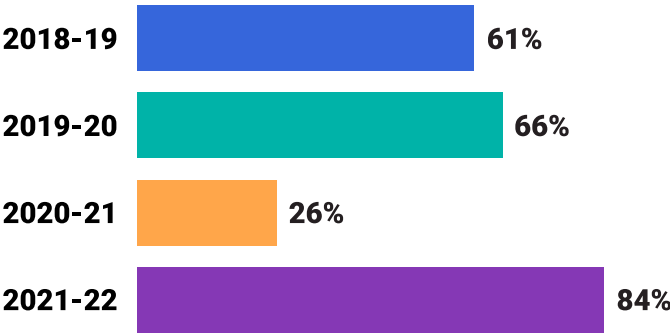
	# of Students	% of Seniors	% of Graduates
Graduated	49	45%	
Graduated in 4 years	36	33%	73%
Graduated in 5 years	12	11%	24%
Graduated in 6 years	1	1%	2%
Ungraduated	61	55%	

Goal Setting

JusticeEd Education Liaisons work with students to set personal goals centered on academic growth, social development, and social capital. In Year 4, 84% of JusticeEd participants set at least one goal. The decline in goal setting seen in 2020-2021 has largely been attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic’s impacts on JusticeEd programming. During this time, the program’s focus shifted to stabilizing families and connecting them to resources.

Goal Setting

The percentage of students who set at least one goal that academic year.



Goal Completion

When looking at past and current students, 69% of program participants completed at least one goal in their time in JusticeEd. The proportion of students with at least one goal completed among all students with closed program enrollment status is twenty percentage points higher than that of students with open program enrollment status. This may reflect the ongoing services a student receives during their time in JusticeEd and the time it takes for newer participants to accomplish their goals.

JusticeEd Program Enrollment Status	Percent with ≥1 Goal Completed	Average Number of Goals Completed
Closed Status (No longer receiving JusticeEd services)	74%	2.5
Open Status (Still receiving JusticeEd services)	54%	2.8
All Participants	69%	2.5

Improved Social and Emotional Outcomes

The growth experienced by JusticeEd participants can be measured in multiple ways. We sought to better understand the short-term outcomes of JusticeEd participants in the areas of social and emotional development. In collaboration with RTI International, an independent, nonprofit research institute, a survey was conducted and completed by 19 eligible participants to provide insights into their experiences and growth.⁸

Self-efficacy is the youth's belief in their ability to produce specific outcomes through their behavior and actions. Ninety percent of youth agreed or strongly agreed that after working with their Education Liaison they were:

- more confident they can succeed at most anything to which they set their mind.
- more confident in their ability to successfully overcome many challenges.
- more confident they can achieve goals they set for themselves.

With respect to self-advocacy at school, about three-quarters of youth (73%) reported feeling more comfortable talking with someone at school if they had a question or problem since working with their Education Liaison.

JusticeEd Partners

JusticeEd takes a holistic approach in its service to court-involved youth. We understand how difficult it is to navigate the public high school system, therefore, we educate our Education Liaisons and partners with the critical knowledge to enable them as champions. During Year 4 of JusticeEd, partners were surveyed,⁹ in which 72% (n=25) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are better prepared to advocate for the rights of justice-involved youth as a result of their partnership with JusticeEd.

90%

of participant youth survey respondents that feel more confident in achieving goals they set for themselves after working with Education Liaisons

73%

of participant youth survey respondents feel more comfortable talking with someone at school if they had a question or problem since working with their Education Liaison

72%

of partner survey respondents feel they are better prepared to advocate for the rights of justice-involved youth as a result of partnering with JusticeEd

Improved Connections with Supportive Adults

Eight JusticeEd participants were interviewed by researchers at San Jose State University between February and April 2022 to obtain their perspectives on JusticeEd services.¹⁰

Research findings share that some respondents reported leaving the juvenile justice system without any plans or guidance about what was next, and their caregivers were not able to provide a way forward. JusticeEd was identified as the only source of support that youth have had in their lives after being involved in the system.

The majority of the research participants identified the program JusticeEd as having a significant impact in changing the course of their life towards more stability. All research participants agreed that their lives may not have changed without being involved in the program JusticeEd. The program allowed the research participants to develop measurable goals towards bettering their lives and achieving a sense of upward mobility both economically and in their educational journeys.



“They just kept me focused, and they were a nice resource to have. They kept me...aligned with my primary desires, identifying goals for myself, which were getting my life back on track...and never going back and experiencing the [the bad things] that happened to me.”

– JusticeEd Youth Participant, 2021-2022

“I wanted to...take my education seriously and not get started later, while I still felt the need to do it, so I didn’t get discouraged, but I didn’t know where to get started, and neither did my parents.”

– JusticeEd Youth Participant, 2021-2022

“[My counselor] brought his laptop to my school and... we did some research together [on degrees and required coursework].”

– JusticeEd Youth Participant, 2021-2022



CONTINUED COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT

The COVID-19 Pandemic disrupted schools and the education of youth in ways no one could have imagined. A number of studies are now finding that during the period of remote learning, students disconnected from school at incredibly high rates, experienced significant levels of learning loss, and are still struggling with the mental health impacts of social isolation. This impact was no less felt among juvenile justice-involved students, who were already overcoming a number of barriers in trying to re-engage in school. As expected, we see this echoed in the data, where we can find declines in already low attendance rates and lower GPA rates among program participants after 2020.

In addition to presenting a number of challenges for students, the pandemic resulted in many disruptions in data consistency and the tracking of student progress. Due to shifts made in attendance and grading during the pandemic, the ability to compare student progress over time has been limited. We see this reflected in our data analysis, especially in the area of suspensions. During the 2020-2021 school year, evaluators found 100% of program participants avoided experiencing a suspension. While this result may appear extremely positive, little can be understood about the programmatic impact on the suspension rate due to the fact that most students remained at home and on distance learning during that time period.

Though little can be done to mitigate these impacts on data availability, we hope to continue to evaluate additional cohorts of program participants to assess trends over time and better understand program impact over time.



CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

After four years of running the JusticeEd Demonstration site, we are in a place of gratitude and reflection. Grateful that our students have trusted us to support them in the journey towards achieving their education goals, grateful that our community has trusted us as partners in working towards improving education outcomes for juvenile justice-involved students county wide, and thoughtful about how we can best apply what we have learned to better support students in our program and at large. Here are some of our main takeaways thus far:

Data Tracking and Analysis

Though we have become better at understanding the data landscape for justice-involved students, we have found that the data currently available is limited and complicated when analyzing over a short period of time. This is prompting us to rethink our approach and data collection efforts in evaluating program impact. First, we are going to explore expanding our internal data collection efforts to better understand student performance during their time with us. We are also, with the help of our evaluators, considering longitudinal studies that will provide us a larger data set and allow us to understand any program impact over time. Both strategies will allow us to investigate areas of program impact we have not yet been able to fully explore and will allow us to better understand our students' path beyond our program period.

To that end, we will be spending Summer 2023 identifying key data points to internally track and will be establishing data collection processes that we hope to implement at the start of the 2023-2024 school year.

Additionally, we have found significant gaps in comparative data at both the local and state level. To address this, we hope to work with partner counties and potentially at the state



level to develop data-tracking that focus more intentionally on this little-understood population. In our data alone, we see huge disparities in student achievement between justice-involved students and the general student population, and we presume this to be true for justice-involved students around the county and state. We hope that by spotlighting our growing understanding of this disparity locally, we will help generate greater support and bring more resources towards helping justice-involved students succeed throughout the state and country.

Student Needs

In serving a number of students with unique needs, we have discovered several resource gaps and barriers that still exist in supporting student success. One primary gap is the need for flexible education options to meet a variety of student circumstances. Though some options exist within Santa Clara County, we have found that there are still significant gaps in options

for parenting students and those with financial obligations and a need to work. Many of the students we work with who are dealing with these circumstances choose independent studies programs because of the flexibility they provide. However, we often see in these programs that students struggle to self-manage the workload and lack of direct instruction. For some, this leads to disengagement, which eventually results in the students being dropped from the program and never re-enrolling in school again. Alternatively, we have found many students find success in hybrid programs that provide flexibility, like a half day of instruction and credit recovery. Unfortunately, these programs are often limited in seats and isolated to a few areas of the county, limiting who may access them.

Since the pandemic, we have also seen a number of students referred to us disengaged from school during the period of virtual learning. Though still enrolled, we found that students had frequently gone entire semesters and sometimes even school years without ever spending a day in class, while others disenrolled and never returned after 2020. As a result, we are now seeing students

struggling with the transition back into the classroom. Our students are expressing feelings of anxiety, lack of motivation, and inadequacy when faced with curriculum, and general disconnection from their education.

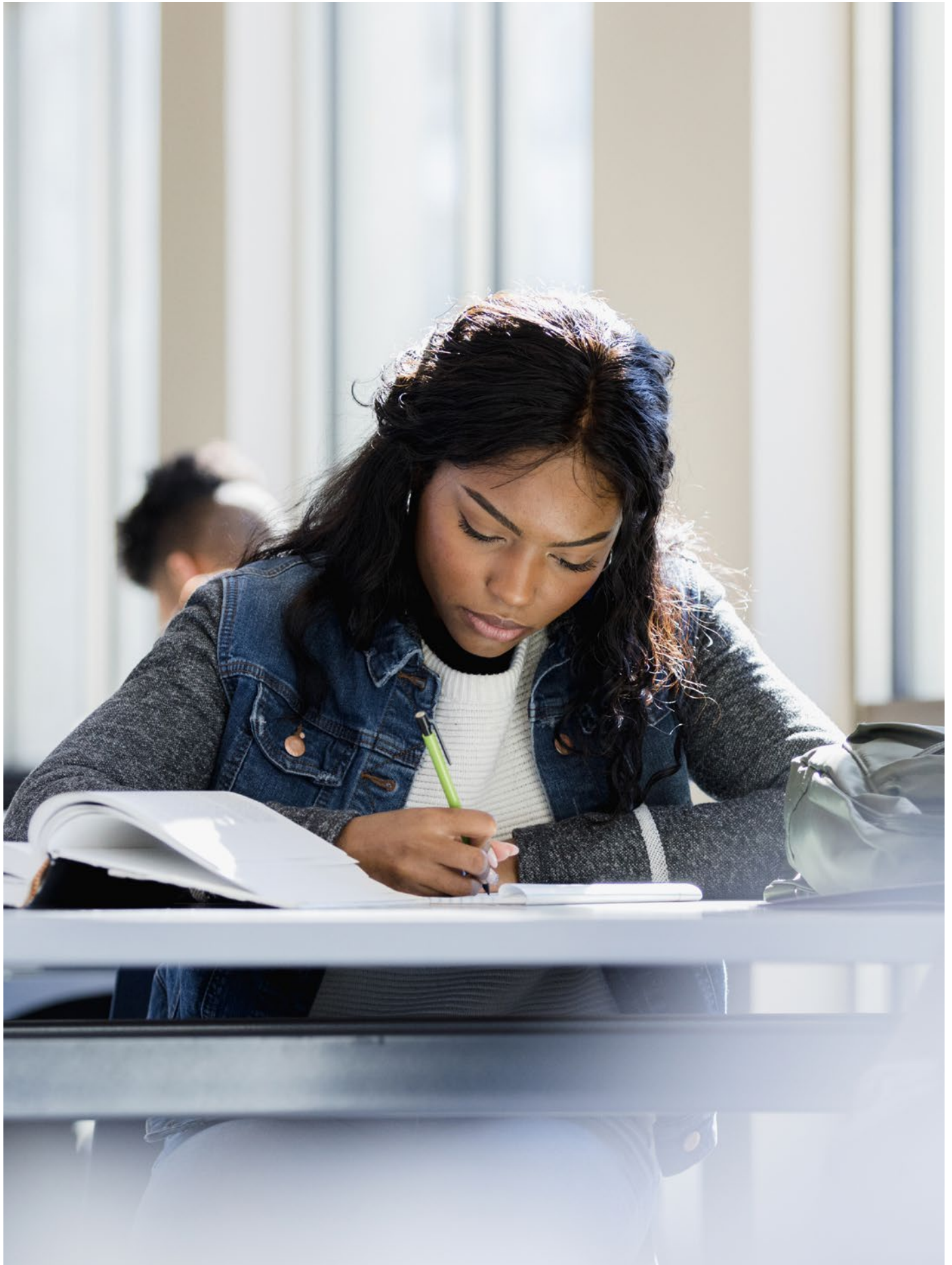
While we do all we can on an individual level to support each of our students, we recognize these needs cannot fully be met without a larger systemic response. Through our practice-to-policy feedback loop and systems change work, we plan to continue to uplift these trends and student experiences to local and state partners in an effort to identify solutions and advocate for resource allocation to meet these needs.

With all that said, while we have learned a lot, there is still much more to learn and understand in how to best support juvenile justice-involved students in achieving academic success. We plan to continue our analysis efforts for both the purpose of refining our program but also in guiding our advocacy efforts locally and around the state. We thank our community partners, families, and students for their partnership on this journey and look forward to sharing more learnings soon!



ENDNOTES

1. This unduplicated count includes all program participants who were in JusticeEd for a minimum of four months.
2. Individualized Education Program (IEP) – The IEP describes the plan for the student’s educational program, including current performance levels, student goals, and the educational placement and other services the student will receive. California Department of Education, Specialized Programs. Retrieved on March 16, 2023 from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/iepmodule3engtext.asp#:~:text=IEP%20%E2%80%93%20Individualized%20Education%20Program%20%E2%80%93%20The,services%20the%20student%20will%20receive>
3. 504 Plan – A plan or set of accommodations to support a student with disabilities in a general classroom setting.
4. Data compiled by JusticeEd staff. Internal staff members conducted a transcript review for 136 students whose transcripts were collected at program entry. Credits completed at program entry defined as total credits completed by the end of last completed semester before program entry date.
5. 4-Year school mobility counts calculated for all JusticeEd participants, regardless of program start date, who were enrolled in 9th grade during 2018-2019 (n=41). Enrollment records limited to those found in DataZone for Santa Clara County public schools.
6. Outcomes were calculated using data provided by NCYL and the Santa Clara County Office of Education’s DataZone platform. DataZone provided attendance, suspension, expulsion, credit completion, school enrollment, and GPA data where the state student identification number matched the record provided by NCYL.
7. Enrollment records limited to Santa Clara County schools. Graduation records include those found in DataZone as well as internal graduation records found in EdTeamConnect.
8. *Santa Clara JusticeEd Survey Project: Memo Prepared for Compassionate Systems*, National Center for Youth Law, RTI International (2022).
9. The JusticeEd Program Partner Feedback Survey was developed by the Santa Clara County Office of Education. The survey was distributed to program partners for a four-week period between May 16, 2022 and June 10, 2022. A total of 41 survey responses were received.
10. *Youth in Transition: Interviews with JusticeEd Young Adults*, San Jose State University (2022).





1212 Broadway, Suite 600
Oakland, CA 94612
youthlaw.org