

SparkPoint Community Schools

2016-17 Evaluation Findings Report

PREPARED FOR UNITED WAY BAY AREA



[public
profit]

[measure and manage
what matters.]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the following people for their active contribution to the 2016-17 evaluation and report:

We are grateful to United Way Bay Area staff for their support.

Sandy Allen, Director, Data and Evaluation

Larry Berry, Director, K-12

Nicole Harden, Program Specialist

Kaila Vidal, Data and Reporting Associate

Elise Washington, K-12 Specialist

Ena Yasuhara Li, Vice President, Community Impact

We also extend our appreciation to all SparkPoint staff and participants. Their participation in the evaluation was integral to the success of this report.

Public Profit Evaluation Team

Justine Wolitzer, Senior Research Associate

Stephanie Kong, Senior Research Assistant

Hannah Pickar, Research Assistant

Corey Newhouse, Founder and Principal

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
ABOUT SPARKPOINT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS	9
UNITED WAY BAY AREA.....	9
SPCS MISSION	9
SPCS SITES	9
ABOUT THE EVALUATION	10
2016-17 EVALUATION FOCUS AND QUESTIONS	10
DATA SOURCES	11
SPCS IMPLEMENTATION	12
FIDELITY TO THE SPCS PROGRAM MODEL	12
ACTIVITY #1: INTEGRATE SPARKPOINT INTO THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL	13
ACTIVITY #2: RECRUIT PARENTS.....	14
ACTIVITY #3: HOST SPARKPOINT PARENT UNIVERSITY SERIES.....	15
ACTIVITY #4: PROVIDE ONE-ON-ONE FINANCIAL COACHING	16
ACTIVITY #5: OFFER SPARKPOINT SERVICES	17
ACTIVITY #6: ENGAGE FAMILIES IN THEIR CHILD’S EDUCATION.....	18
SPCS PARTICIPATION	20
PARTICIPATION	20
DEMOGRAPHICS	21
RETENTION	22
SPCS IMPACT	25
HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT	25
CHILDREN’S ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT.....	29
FAMILY EMPOWERMENT	32
CONTRIBUTION TO LEARNING IN THE FIELD	33
CONCLUSION	34
RECOMMENDATIONS	35
APPENDICES	38
APPENDIX A: SPCS LOGIC MODEL	38
APPENDIX B: CLIENT SURVEY RESULTS.....	39
APPENDIX C: CLIENT PARTICIPATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS	44
APPENDIX D: HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL OUTCOMES	46
APPENDIX E: CHILD ACADEMIC OUTCOMES	47
APPENDIX F: CLIENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL	49
APPENDIX G: STAFF INTERVIEW PROTOCOL	50
APPENDIX H: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL	51

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

About SparkPoint Community Schools (SPCS)

SparkPoint Community Schools (SPCS), a program of United Way Bay Area, helps families gain a stable financial footing while simultaneously supporting students' well-being and academic success. Traditionally, financial education has not been a part of the community schools model; programs focused on youth services and did not offer opportunities for parents to increase their own education or job skills. The SPCS model uses a two-generation approach – involving both youth and their parents – to shift the paradigm by strengthening whole families.

Key Findings

In the 2016-17 program year, Public Profit undertook a mixed methods approach to evaluating SPCS program activities at the initiative's six sites. We used client interviews, staff interviews, participant surveys, administrative data, and staff focus groups to explore implementation fidelity, participation patterns, household economic improvement, and child academic improvement. The highlights from our findings are shared below.

SPCS Participation and Implementation

- **SPCS sites served 251 families, exceeding the annual goal.** The six SPCS sites served 251 families in the 2016-17 program year, exceeding UWBA's annual goal of serving 240 families.
- **Sites implemented the SPCS program model in different ways based on each school's population and context.** Sites ranged from being fully embedded in the host school to having little connection to their host school. All sites recruited parents, though more established sites were more successful. All sites offered workshops and one-on-one financial coaching, with some sites focusing more on coaching than workshops and vice versa. Additionally, the specific structure and content of workshops varied among sites, as did the accessibility and use of coaching. All sites supported family engagement, with many sites explicitly messaging the connection between household financial stability and children's academic success.

"SparkPoint is enlightening, empowering, and motivating. When I leave those classes, I'm like 'yes, I can do this!'."

- SparkPoint Participant

SPCS Retention

- **Most participants became clients, fewer became measurable clients.** The SPCS service model is designed to support participants on a long-term, ongoing basis. Across the six sites, most participants (86%) decided to become clients (as defined by completing a baseline assessment). Of those participants who became clients, close to two-thirds (64%) became measurable clients (as defined by completing at least one follow-up assessment). Retention patterns – the proportion of participants that became clients, and then measurable clients – varied by site.
- **Retention was primarily driven by participants' internal motivation.** Participant interview and survey data suggested that retention was primarily driven by an individual's intrinsic motivation to improve their finances. Some parents also mentioned the logistical conveniences, incentives, and support from staff/other parents as factors that motivated them to continue in the program.

*"My motivation was I could get some other type of life."
- SparkPoint Participant*

SPCS Impact - Household Economic Improvement

- **About 8 out of 10 clients experienced tangible household economic improvements.** SPCS participation was associated with improvements in a household's finances. Across all six sites, nearly 8 out of 10 measurable clients (78%) achieved at least 5% progress in at least one category of financial improvement: increasing income, building savings, improving credit score, or reducing debt. This exceeded UWBA's goal of having this level of improvement for 70% of clients. Furthermore, it is notable that close to half of SPCS measurable clients (46%) achieved at least a 30% increase in savings.
- **Nearly all participants learned financial strategies.** Financial changes can take time. While not all participants tangibly improved their financial situation this year, nearly all participants experienced positive changes in their financial knowledge and mindset. More than 9 in 10 participants reported they learned strategies to reduce their debt, save money, and increase their credit score. Furthermore, all interviewees said they made financial behavioral changes based on what they learned in SPCS. This widespread improvement in financial knowledge and behaviors suggests that even clients who did not experience immediate financial progress have the skills and tools they need to make progress in the near future.

*"I learned a lot about building up credit and how to build credit without getting in debt."
- SparkPoint Participant*

SPCS Impact - Children's Academic Improvement

- **SPCS helped parents support their children's academic success.** We found evidence that supported the theorized association between participation in SPCS and parents' ability to support children's academic success. SPCS parents became more involved with their child's school and teachers. Nearly all survey respondents (97%) said they were more actively involved in their child's school since participating in SPCS. Moreover, most clients (93%) agreed that SPCS helped them feel more comfortable partnering with teachers and other school staff to understand and promote their child's academic success.
- **SPCS contributed to building a college-going culture within the family.** Both clients and staff said that SPCS's workshops related to saving for college and thinking about long-term family goals increased the conversations parents had with their children about college. These conversations in turn contributed to building more of a college-going culture within the family. Survey data aligned with these observations, with 9 out of 10 parents (90%) reporting that SPCS helped them learn about the link between their family's financial health and their child's academic possibilities. Additionally, more than 8 out of 10 parents (86%) said they looked into college savings plans since participating in SPCS.

"They want to go to college, they want to see Mommy go to college. Our whole family is about trying to succeed. We have a better outlook on life."

- SparkPoint Participant

SPCS Impact - Family Empowerment

- **SPCS empowered clients and their children in a mutually reinforcing cycle.** Several parents described the importance of passing the new financial knowledge down to their children so their children will have stronger financial futures. Parents also described the sense of empowerment they felt by taking control of their finances and pursuing leadership opportunities that developed out of SPCS. Both staff and clients said that children noticed these changes and saw their parents as role models in a way that was mutually reinforcing to both parents and children.

"I felt so much empowerment after going through this and more confident approaching my children and empowering them."

- SparkPoint Participant

Recommendations

The UWBA team continues to refine the SPCS model based on the learning from each cycle. We suggest UWBA consider the following recommendations as they embark on this process.

Essential Program Components

While SPCS can flourish in diverse environments, we identified several attributes that appear to be necessary for a site to have a successful SPCS program. We recommend UWBA staff require these program components in future site selections (if they are not already requirements) and identify ways to support programs in maintaining these components:

- **The principal must be supportive and actively involved in building buy-in and awareness among families, teachers, and school staff.** Schools without the support of the principal faced challenges integrating into the school even if other staff members were engaged.
- **A school staff member, who is trusted by families, needs to help promote SPCS.** Families were more receptive to the program when someone they already trusted referred them.
- **The school must have the capacity to prioritize SPCS.** Just as clients must be “SparkPoint-ready” before they can be expected to be successful in the program, schools also need to be “SparkPoint-ready.” A school cannot provide the infrastructure necessary to support SparkPoint if they are in crisis and focused on other priorities.
- **The site must build sustainable systems that outlast specific relationships since staff turnover is common.** Since each site does not have many SPCS staff members, every vacancy can have a big impact on programming if established systems are not in place.

Program Components to Define

A key strength of the SPCS program model is that it is flexible and can be customized for each school’s population and context. However, we recommend UWBA consider making certain elements of the model more defined and/or explicit.

The following questions were recurring themes throughout our evaluation:

- Who are SPCS sites expected serve?
- What are retention expectations?
- Are sites expected to explicitly message the connection between household financial stability and children’s academic success?
- Is the SPCS model intended for all grade levels?
- What is the role of the SPCS site staff and what is the role of UWBA staff and other partners?

Data Recommendations

The SPCS model values rigorous tracking of outcomes for parents and children. Through our data collection process for the evaluation, we identified several ways SPCS sites can better track client outcome and participation data:

- **Support sites in using standardized ways to track participation.** Participation data is important for a full understanding of how the program is being implemented and how a participant's service and dosage mix might influence their outcomes. In this year's evaluation, inconsistent data quality limited the extent of our participation analysis. We recommended setting clear data expectations and conducting monthly Quality Assurance checks to catch data quality issues early on and be able to provide SPCS staff with timely data support.
- **Work with sites to recognize and address common data collection challenges.** SPCS staff at two sites described some participants being hesitant or unable to provide data due to cultural barriers, fears related to their immigration status, and/or incomplete knowledge of their household's finances. We suggest encouraging sites to share their data collection strategies with each other and providing sites with guidance on which data points are of the highest value.
- **Refine academic outcome metrics.** For the last two evaluation cycles, sites have had difficulties accessing student academic data. Only a small proportion of measureable clients had corresponding child academic data, and some of this data had quality issues. Even if more high quality data were available, SPCS staff at four sites expressed doubts that the current academic data metrics could capture SPCS's impact on children. Since child outcomes are an important aspect of the SPCS two-generation approach, we recommend conducting a discovery process on how to improve tracking the academic metrics and to work with SPCS staff and participants to identify additional measures that might provide more meaningful data about SPCS's impact on child outcomes.

Looking Ahead

Next year the UWBA team plans to support SparkPoint Centers in strengthening their staff leadership, partnership development, data quality, and sustainability plans. Next year's evaluation will include all three of SparkPoint's program types: SparkPoint Community Schools; SparkPoint Community Colleges; and SparkPoint Regional Centers. Expanding the reach of the annual evaluation will provide a more robust view of the SparkPoint initiative as a whole.

2015-16 Evaluation Highlights

The 2016-17 evaluation builds off of our findings from the 2015-16 evaluation. Last year we undertook a mixed methods approach to evaluate SPCS program activities at three sites. We explored the client experience using SPCS services, non-client perceptions of SPCS services, and the SPCS staff experience as it related to building and graduating client cohorts. Highlights from our findings included:

- Participant recruitment greatly increased in 2015-16, to 197 participants from 80 in the previous year. The vast majority (85%) of 2014-15 participants returned for additional services in 2015-16, which indicated interest in and satisfaction with SPCS services.
- Recruitment was influenced by the taboos related to discussing finances. Clients and non-clients reported similar levels of school engagement and interest in their household finances, yet non-clients were much more likely to report being uncomfortable discussing their family's financial situation with outsiders.
- Half of all clients made tangible progress toward one or more financial goals. Additionally, the use of SPCS financial education and coaching was associated with positive changes in a household's financial behavior, such as researching college savings plans and budgeting.
- Qualitative data suggested an association between SPCS parent participation and children's academic outcomes. Preliminary academic data aligned with this finding: more families with 5%+ progress in at least one financial category saw improvements in their child's GPA compared to families with less financial progress.

ABOUT SPARKPOINT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

United Way Bay Area

United Way Bay Area (UWBA) brings together individuals, nonprofits, businesses, and local government partners to create lasting impact through two main efforts: poverty-fighting initiatives and community engagement. UWBA invests in initiatives that work to end the cycle of poverty so that all Bay Area residents have the opportunity to prosper and thrive; UWBA empowers individuals to donate, advocate, and volunteer to strengthen the community and change lives.

UWBA operates six core programs designed to move people out of poverty. Each year these programs reach more than 250,000 Bay Area residents by connecting them to food, shelter, work opportunities, academic and career help, and financial literacy resources.

UWBA:

United Way Bay Area

SPCS:

SparkPoint Community Schools

Two-Generation Approach:

Two-generation approaches provide opportunities for and meet the needs of children and their parents together.¹

SPCS Mission

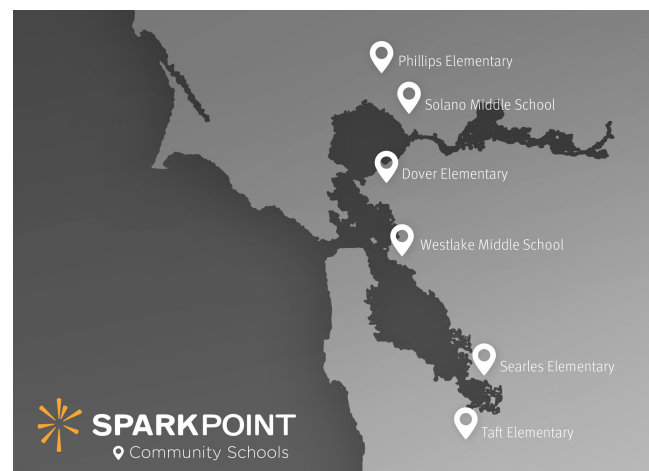
The **SparkPoint Community Schools (SPCS)** program helps families gain financial stability while simultaneously supporting students' well-being and academic success. Traditionally, financial education hasn't been a part of the community schools model; programs focused on youth services and did not offer opportunities for parents to increase their own education or job skills. The SPCS model uses a two-generation approach – involving both youth and their parents – to shift the paradigm by strengthening whole families.

SPCS Sites

In 2016-17, UWBA had six SPCS sites throughout the San Francisco Bay Area (Figure 1):

- Dover Elementary School, San Pablo
- Phillips Elementary School, Napa
- Searles Elementary School, Union City
- Solano Middle School, Vallejo
- Taft Elementary School, Redwood City
- Westlake Middle School, Oakland

FIGURE 1: MAP OF 2016-17 SPCS SITES



¹ *Two Generation Playbook*, Ascend, The Aspen Institute, 2016.

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

2016-17 Evaluation Focus and Questions

Public Profit applied a mixed methods approach to evaluating SPCS program activities, exploring both participant and staff experiences.

Data collection and reporting was guided by a set of evaluation questions in six key theme areas:

Fidelity to Program Model

- How do stakeholders describe the SPCS model at their site? What are the similarities and differences between sites?
- To what extent does this align with the intended SPCS program model?

School Site Engagement

- In what ways has SPCS integrated itself into the school site?
- How knowledgeable are school/district staff about SPCS at the different leadership levels (e.g., Principals, Teachers, Coordinators, Administrators)?

Participation in SPCS Services

- What is the client retention rate at the different stages of the SPCS service model?

Household Economic Improvement

- What influence does the use of SPCS financial education and coaching have on households' financial behavior and choices?
- In what ways is SPCS participation associated with improvements in a household's finances and economic situation (including increased income and other measures)?

Children's Academic Improvement

- Is there a correlation between improvement in a family's economic situation and children's academic performance and school attendance?
- What are the common characteristics of students with the greatest academic improvements?

Contribution to Learning in the Field

- In what ways does the SPCS model contribute to learning, knowledge on best practices, and discussion in the field?
- In what ways have SPCS model innovations been made available to others who can benefit?

Data Sources

We used a variety of evaluation activities to collect data at different points throughout the year, including client surveys (Spanish and English), client interviews (Spanish and English), staff interviews, staff focus groups, and administrative data (Table 1). We designed the surveys to assess clients' perception of the program and to explore the factors that lead some families to successfully participate in SparkPoint. As a complement to surveys, client interviews yielded in-depth, qualitative information about participants' experiences with the program and how it has impacted their households. We interviewed SPCS staff and school staff to learn how the SPCS model was implemented at each site. We also conducted two focus groups with SPCS staff to gain a deeper understanding of the commonalities and differences between the sites. Additionally, UWBA provided client financial information, as well as student data, from the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database, which included 2016-17 administrative data for all clients and child outcome data for some clients.

TABLE 1. EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

DATA SOURCE	COLLECTION TIMEFRAME	N=
Client Surveys	Dec 2016 - May 2017	96
Client Interviews	Jan - Feb 2017	9
Staff Interviews	Mar - Apr 2017	12
Staff Focus Group (Fall)	Sep 2016	12
Staff Focus Group (Spring)	Apr 2017	13
Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) data	Jul 2016 - Jun 2017	251

Data Limitations

We were unable to report on exact counts for Parent University participation, coaching participation, and participation from host school parents due to inconsistent data quality in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database. Additionally, insufficient child data limited the extent of our quantitative analysis on child academic outcomes. Finally, some interviews and surveys took place mid-way through the year, before all participants had completed a full program cycle.

SPCS IMPLEMENTATION

Fidelity to the SPCS Program Model

SPCS Program Model

United Way Bay Area developed a logic model (Appendix A) to describe the intended SPCS program model. The program's ultimate goal is to increase student achievement through increased economic stability and family engagement. The logic model includes the following intended site activities to reach this goal:

- Integrate SparkPoint into the community school
- Recruit parents
- Host a SparkPoint Parent University series
- Provide one-on-one financial and career coaching
- Offer SparkPoint services
- Train families to develop a Family School Action Plan²

The intended activities are fairly broad and allow room for each site to customize its program model in the ways that work best for each school's specific population and context. In this section of the report we examine the extent to which each site has implemented the activities described above (Table 2). We also describe the key themes that emerged related to the similarities and differences between sites in how they chose to customize the model.

TABLE 2. SITES VARIED IN TERMS OF HOW THEY IMPLEMENTED THE PROGRAM MODEL

	Dover	Phillips	Searles	Solano	Taft	Westlake
Integrate SparkPoint into the community school	●	●	◐	○	◐	◐
Recruit parents	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐
Host a SparkPoint Parent University series	●	◐	●	●	◐	●
Provide one-on-one financial and career coaching	◐	●	◐	●	◐	◐
Offer SparkPoint services	●	●	●	●	●	●
Engage families in their child's education	●	●	◐	●	◐	●
Key:	● Fully Implemented	◐ Partially Implemented	○ Not Implemented			

² The logic model describes training parents to develop a Family-School Action Plan. However, in practice, sites were asked to "Engage families in their child's education" more generally. Our report focuses on this more generalized activity to align with UWBA's updated expectations for sites.

Activity #1: Integrate SparkPoint into the Community School

Some sites were well integrated with the host school; others were not

The SPCS sites at Dover and Phillips were fully integrated with their host schools. They had a designated physical presence, clients noticed the connections, and SPCS staff worked closely with the host schools' principals and Community School Coordinators. The other sites had not yet reached this stage.



Sites with the most success had a school-based champion.

The principals at Dover, Phillips, and Searles were very involved with the SPCS programs at their respective schools. These principals were key players in launching the program and building buy-in among teachers. The community school coordinators at Dover, Searles, and Taft were also involved with the SPCS programs. Conversely, SPCS staff at Westlake noted the lack of a community school coordinator made their integration more difficult. Solano, Taft, and Westlake all experienced principal transitions and/or difficulty developing partnerships with principals. SPCS staff at Taft and Solano noted that this was a reason they were not as integrated with their host schools. In fact, SPCS staff at Solano said that none of this year's participants were referred by school staff. Client survey data showed that clients noticed when the host school was less involved; parents at Westlake and Taft were less likely to agree their principal was involved or that SPCS received recognition from the school.

A physical space for SPCS on the school campus was helpful, but did not guarantee integration.

All of the sites, except Searles, had a designated SPCS program space and/or staff office physically located on the school campus. SPCS staff at Dover said this was important because it was easy for parents to drop their kids off at school and go straight to the workshops. Additionally, the school had the capacity to support multiple language needs. However, a physical presence on campus was not enough to guarantee integration, as Solano and Westlake had permanent SPCS spaces on the campus and yet still struggled to integrate with the school.

School-level support was more impactful than district-level support.

The two most integrated sites, Dover and Phillips, reported some level of district involvement as the program was developing, but then shifted to a primarily school-based effort once the program was established. Taft and Solano, two of the sites that faced challenges integrating with their host schools, had more district-level than school-level support. In fact, Taft was the only SPCS site that was staffed by the district, rather than a community-based organization. Solano had strong support from the superintendent when it was first being established. Unfortunately, the district transitioned to a new superintendent who was less involved with SPCS. It is possible this district support would have benefited Solano more if the support had been sustained across superintendents.

Activity #2: Recruit Parents

All sites recruited parents; more established sites were more successful

Two SPCS sites, Dover and Solano, surpassed UWBA's goal of serving 40 parents annually. However, based on available data, the vast majority of parents served by the Solano site did not have children at the host school.



Most sites met or nearly met recruitment goals.

Dover and Solano surpassed UWBA's goal of serving 40 parents annually by serving 75 and 60 participants, respectively. Other sites came close to meeting the goal: Phillips (29), Taft (35), and Westlake (36). In the future, UWBA might choose to have customized goals for each site since recruitment likely varies based on how established a program is and how SPCS fits within its larger programming. For instance, SPCS staff at Phillips noted they limit their caseload to 25 individuals since their case management is so in-depth.

Retention should be considered when looking at recruitment data.

The number of participants recruited by sites ranged from 16 to 75. Yet, it is important to also consider the depth and frequency of participation. For instance, while the SPCS site at Searles served fewer participants than the SPCS site at Taft, a greater proportion of participants at Searles went on to become clients. More details about recruitment and retention are covered in the Participation section on page 20. For more details on recruitment strategies, please see the "2015-16 SparkPoint Community Schools Evaluation" report.

Most sites primarily served families at their respective schools; the extent to which they served other families varied.

Dover, Westlake, and Phillips primarily served families with children at their respective school sites. Taft Elementary School was the program's home base for the entire district, and was promoted throughout the district and open to all members of the community. Few of Solano's clients came from the host school; nearly all came from the community or outreach done at the neighboring elementary school. Solano staff noted outreach was more successful at the elementary school than at the host school because the elementary school principal played an active role. Searles' first cohort was open to all members of the community, while the site focused recruitment for the second cohort from among Searles families in keeping with UWBA's two-generation approach. Community members were still allowed to participate at Searles, but they were not targeted by recruitment efforts and not eligible for incentives.

Activity #3: Host SparkPoint Parent University Series

All sites offered some type of Parent University workshops, but the specific structure and content varied

Dover, Searles, Solano, and Westlake offered SparkPoint-branded Parent University workshop series. Phillips provided ad hoc workshops as needed and Taft embedded its workshops into another nonprofit's program series. The entity delivering the workshops also varied by site, ranging from the site's SparkPoint Coordinator, staff from the main SparkPoint center, outside financial experts such as Wells Fargo, and family engagement consultants, High Expectations, who were contracted by UWBA to provide services.



Dover, Searles, and Westlake offered a series of traditional SparkPoint financial workshops.

Dover's workshops were integrated into the school's Parent University structure, which also included non-financial content developed by the California PTA. Searles' financial workshops were called SparkPoint University and focused exclusively on financial stability. Westlake's financial workshops in the past focused exclusively on financial stability but this year made more of a connection between finances and preparing for a child's path to college.

Solano and Phillips focused more on 1:1 financial coaching (Activity #4) rather than ongoing financial workshops.

Solano offered SparkPoint Parent University, which was used as an opportunity to recruit parents to do 1:1 financial coaching, but the workshops did not include financial content. Instead, the workshops focused on child development and parenting strategies. Phillips' SparkPoint work centered around 1:1 financial coaching and case management. It offered ad hoc financial workshops based on common needs identified through case management sessions. These workshops were coordinated through the school's general Parent University and were open to all parents.

Taft offered financial education by partnering with another nonprofit's cohort series.

Taft's SparkPoint program offered financial education by partnering with the LiveAble Women program that was offered at the Taft campus by the nonprofit Able Works. The LiveAble Women program provided peer support through an ongoing cohort series and 1:1 case management with a focus on wellness and parenting. It was a natural fit to embed SparkPoint's financial education into the program. In previous years, Taft offered a SparkPoint financial workshop series, but found it did not work well as a stand-alone offering.

Activity #4: Provide One-on-One Financial Coaching

All sites offered some level of 1:1 financial coaching, but the accessibility and use varied

Phillips and Solano provided financial coaching that was similar to in-depth case management and was well used by clients. The other sites offered lighter touch coaching, which was not accessed as frequently.



One-on-one coaching was the primary way Phillips and Solano served SparkPoint clients.

Phillips' SparkPoint Coordinator coached up to 25 SparkPoint clients at a time at the Family Resource Center on the school campus. Coaching at Solano happened at the SparkPoint Center on the school campus, although the majority of the clients were from other schools or were community members. Both Phillips and Solano communicated regularly with clients, checking in at least once every 90 days.

The four other sites offered ad hoc coaching as needed, but for various reasons, this coaching was infrequently used.

Dover's coaching was not offered at the school site this year because a staff member was on leave. Clients were invited to do coaching at the main SparkPoint Contra Costa office, but few clients went because the location was not as convenient. Staff interview data indicated that Dover's coaching had been used often in previous years. Searles and Westlake both offered coaching at the school site, but few families took advantage of this coaching; SPCS staff at Searles planned to offer an incentive during future workshop series to encourage participants to return for coaching. While some Taft clients participated in financial coaching, staff reported it was not in-depth coaching. Since Taft did not have a designated financial coach, the coaching was done as possible by the SPCS Coordinator who had many other responsibilities.

Activity #5: Offer SparkPoint Services

All sites offered a range of SparkPoint services

Sites varied in their exact mix of services depending on their client needs and their staff resources. All sites also connected participants to other non-financial services as needed.



Most sites were connected with a larger regional SparkPoint Center, which helped them provide services.

All of the sites except for two (Phillips and Taft) were affiliated with a larger regional SparkPoint Center. This affiliation helped sites bring in experienced SparkPoint coaches to teach their workshops and work one-on-one with individuals. Staff members at Taft noted that this lack of affiliation was a disadvantage, as they did not have easy access to in-house experts to provide financial services.

Most sites were connected to a Family Resource Center with additional services.

All but one site (Dover) had a formal relationship with a Family Resource Center (FRC). This relationship made it easy for sites to refer SparkPoint clients for other non-financial services and vice versa. Phillips, Taft, and Westlake had an FRC located on the school campus. At these sites, SPCS was a fully integrated program; clients used both SPCS and FRC services seamlessly without necessarily being aware that SPCS was its own entity. Searles was connected to the Kidzone FRC that served families from the whole district. While the Kidzone FRC was not located on site, it was nearby and Searles parents were very familiar with it.

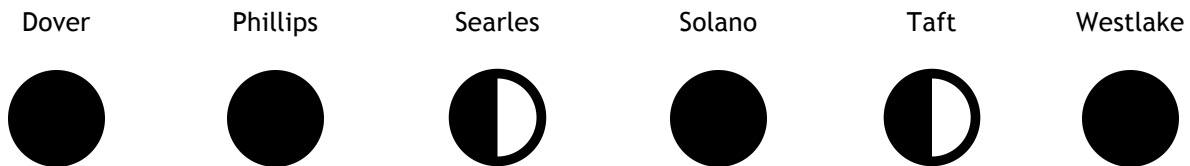
Sites added services based on their populations' specific needs.

All sites supported clients' in non-financial household needs, either directly or by connecting them to other services. Some sites developed additional services if they saw an unmet need among their clients. For instance, Dover, which has a large Latino population, found that many clients had fears related to immigration. SPCS connected with Catholic Charities to provide an immigration workshop. Additionally, Dover offered workshops for first time homebuyers and about homeowners' rights after foreclosure based on client requests. Similarly, Searles offered eviction services and rental assistance.

Activity #6: Engage Families in their Child's Education

Sites engaged families in their child's education in multiple ways

All SPCS programs engaged families in their child's education, with Dover, Phillips, Solano, and Westlake doing so most explicitly.



All SPCS sites supported families to engage with their child's education.

Staff members at all sites noted their belief that financial stability leads to less household stress and this frees up time and emotional energy to focus on other things, such as their child's education. Since all sites were embedded in a community school or a family resource center, sites were able to refer clients to other services for parents and/or children that could support educational success. Staff also commented on the importance for both parents and children of children seeing their parents attending a class on campus, completing a graduation ceremony, or taking on a leadership role. For more details, see "Children's Academic Improvement" on page 29 in the Impact section.

Many sites explicitly messaged the connection between household financial stability and children's academic success.

This year, Dover, Westlake, and Solano had a SPCS curriculum that specifically focused on saving for college, setting family goals, and/or partnering with teachers. Additionally, Solano offered a \$50 incentive if parents set up a child savings account for college. Phillips' coaching included a goal setting process that often included specific goals for their children's education. Furthermore, Phillips and Searles hosted financial education sessions where both parents and children could participate together. Searles and Taft did not offer content that explicitly linked SPCS's work with child academic success, but these connections sometimes came up informally.

Promising Practices: Havenscourt Parent University

The SparkPoint Community School model can learn from the implementation of a spring 2017 pilot program that has since joined the SparkPoint Community Schools network. Havenscourt Parent University was part of the Havenscourt Healthy Neighborhood Collaborative, a neighborhood-based initiative to improve the health of Havenscourt residents. The Parent University recruited parents from several local schools that were located on a shared campus.

The Havenscourt Parent University offered nine sessions, including an initial financial planning/goal-setting workshop facilitated by SparkPoint Oakland, four Parent Café sessions facilitated by Oakland Parents Together, and four Parent Leadership workshops facilitated by High Expectations. Additionally, one-on-one financial coaching was offered to participants.

The pilot celebrated many successes. Recruitment and retention were strong. There was a large turnout, with an unduplicated attendance of 50 parents and 34 graduates. Partners noted this was because of the consistent point staff person who built relationships with families. The program engaged a diverse group of parents, and sessions were presented in three languages (English, Spanish, and Arabic). While it was a logistical challenge to have multiple in-person interpreters and to translate all written materials, staff and partners noted it was meaningful to serve such a diverse group of parents in one room and break cultural barriers in the neighborhood.

Staff and Partners learned the following lessons to inform their future work:

- **Align partners' curriculum to the program outcomes:** Partnering with multiple nonprofits was a powerful aspect of the program design, as each organization brought a different perspective and area of expertise. However, partners noted the intended program outcomes were not made explicit to all partner organizations. Some partners mentioned they would have tailored their content differently if they were aware of the intended program outcomes.
- **Integrate finances throughout the program:** Partners suggested that in the future the program integrate content on finances and financial resiliency into the entire Parent University sequence, instead of one finance-specific workshop.
- **Build a strong relationship with host site:** Several implementation challenges arose from weak relationships with the host school site. The flow of the workshops was disrupted by difficulties accessing space and equipment. Additionally, it was difficult to secure an appropriate, private location for financial coaching sessions. Only six parents participated in financial coaching, in part because of the space challenges.

Overall, staff and partners noted the pilot was a success and look forward to future iterations of the program.

SPCS PARTICIPATION

The SPCS service model includes three stages of participation

The SPCS service model includes three stages: 1) Participant, 2) Client, and 3) Measurable Client. All individuals who attend a SparkPoint event or receive a SparkPoint service are considered participants. Participants who complete a welcome form and fill out a baseline assessment are considered clients. Clients who return and complete a follow-up assessment are considered measurable clients.

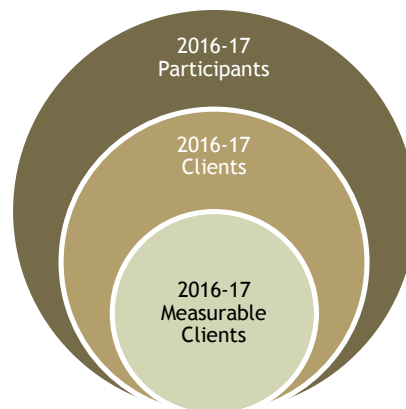
The definitions we use in this report are:

2016-17 Participants: Individuals who interacted with SPCS in any way in the 2016-17 fiscal year. This could include attending an event, receiving a service, or completing an assessment.

2016-17 Clients: Individuals who were 2016-17 participants and also had a baseline assessment completed at any time. All 2016-17 Clients are also considered 2016-17 Participants.

2016-17 Measurable Clients: Individuals who had follow-up assessment completed in the 2016-17 fiscal year. All 2016-17 Measurable Clients are also considered 2016-17 Clients and 2016-17 Participants.

FIGURE 2: DEFINITION OF SPCS PARTICIPANTS AND CLIENTS



Source: Information provided by UWBA.

Participation

SPCS sites served 251 families, exceeding the annual goal

Overall, the SPCS sites served 251 families, exceeding UWBA's annual goal of serving 240 families. Dover and Solano served the highest number of participants (75 and 60, respectively); these sites have existed two or three years longer than the newer sites (Taft, Phillips and Searles). Westlake, also one of the more established sites, served far fewer participants than Dover and Solano, likely due to this year's agency and school transitions.

FIGURE 3: SPCS SITES SERVED 251 PARTICIPANTS IN 2016-17

Dover 75	Solano 60	Westlake 36	Taft 35	Phillips 29	Searles 16
-------------	--------------	----------------	------------	----------------	---------------

Source: SPCS ETO Data (N=251), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017.

Demographics

The majority of SPCS participants were female

Participants in SparkPoint across all sites were largely female (89%); however, their other characteristics varied greatly by site.³ Overall, the majority of participants were Latino (73%), however this was partly driven by the large number of Latino participants served at Dover, which had the greatest enrollment numbers. The vast majority of participants at Dover, Searles, and Phillips were Latino. The majority of participants at Solano and Westlake were African American. Similarly, the primary language spoken at home differed among sites, with primarily Spanish-speakers at Dover, Searles, and Phillips, and primarily English speakers at Westlake and Solano. Half of the participants were married (50%), and nearly 4 out of 10 were employed at the time of baseline assessment (38%).

Most SPCS participants were renters, some were without housing

Siemer Institute, a SPCS funder, describes SparkPoint as “an intentional way to bridge financial stability and affordable housing.”⁴ SparkPoint staff members collect data on clients’ housing situations to explore the ways in which housing stability and financial stability are inextricably connected. The majority of clients (70%) were living in rental housing at baseline assessment. A little less than one-fifth of clients (17%) owned their home and about 8% of clients were currently without housing or living with friends (Table 3).

TABLE 3: CLIENT HOUSING AT BASELINE

HOUSING SITUATION	PERCENTAGE OF CLIENTS AT BASELINE
Renting	70%
Own a home	17%
Live with family or friends	4%
Currently without housing	4%
Section 8 or subsidized housing	4%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=46), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017.

³ SPCS ETO Data (n=83 for gender, n=64 for race/ethnicity), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Race/ethnicity and language data was not available from Taft.

⁴ Siemer Institute, <https://familystability.org/community-highlights/bay-area/>

Retention

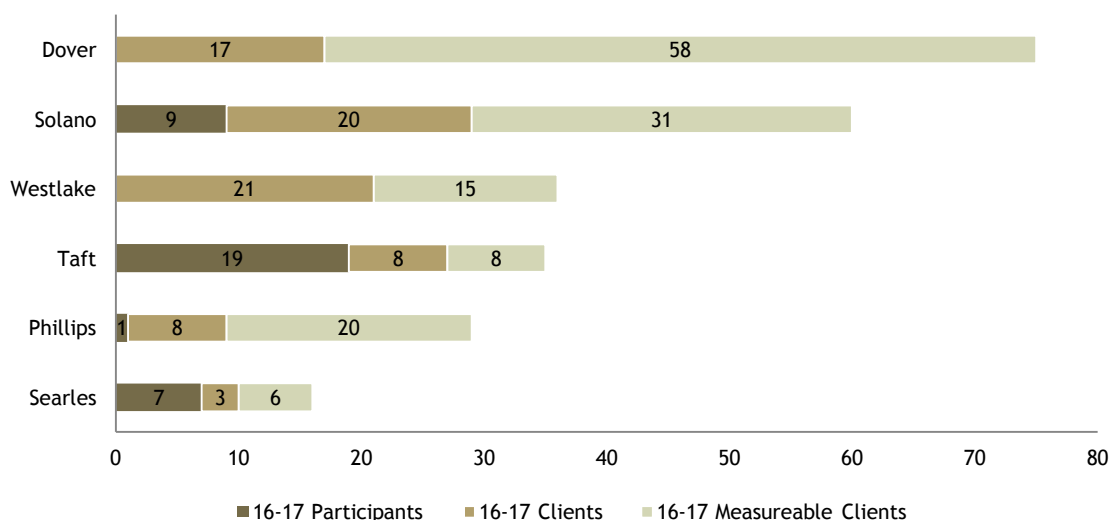
Most participants became clients, fewer became measureable clients

The SPCS service model is designed to support participants on a long-term, ongoing basis. Across the six sites, most participants (86%) decided to become clients (as defined by completing a baseline assessment). Of those participants who became clients, close to two-thirds (64%) came back for at least one follow-up assessment. Clients who returned for a follow-up assessment are considered to be measurable clients since it is possible to track their financial progress.

Retention patterns varied by site

Retention patterns – the proportion of participants that became clients, and then measurable clients - varied by site (Figure 4). All or nearly all participants at Dover, Phillips, and Westlake went on to become clients. In contrast, roughly half of the participants at Taft and Searles became clients. Moreover, at both Dover and Phillips, large proportions of their clients become measurable clients (58/75 and 20/28, respectively).

FIGURE 4: SITES HAD VARYING LEVELS OF RETENTION

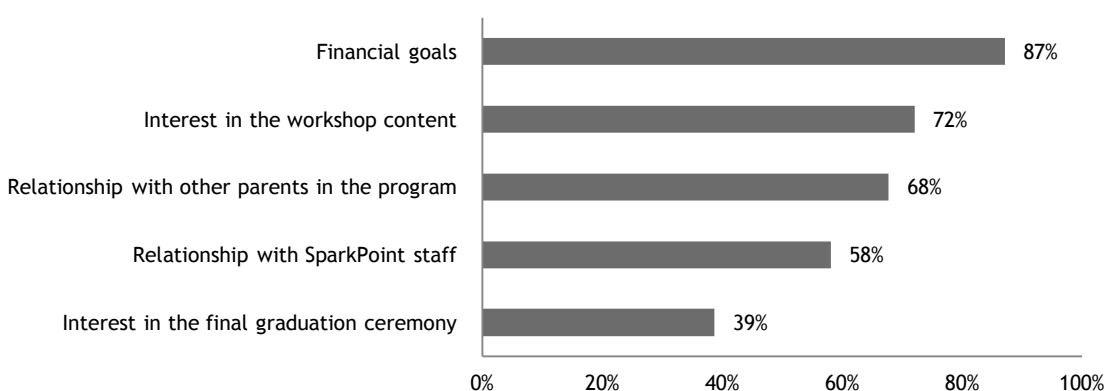


Source: SPCS ETO Data (N=251), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. The colors represent the highest participation stage each participant reached by the end of 2016-17. Sites with greater proportions of measureable clients indicate higher levels of retention.

Retention was primarily driven by participants' internal motivation

Participant survey data suggested that retention was driven by an individual's intrinsic motivation to improve their finances. When asked what motivated them to continue participating in SparkPoint, nearly 9 in 10 said it was because of their financial goals (87%) and 7 in 10 said it was because of their interest in the workshop content (72%). This stands in contrast to the lower responses to external motivation factors, such as relationships with staff (58%) and interest in the graduation ceremony (39%) (Figure 5). Client interview data aligned with the survey findings, with most parents citing their goals and/or interest in the content as what motivated them to stick with the program.

FIGURE 5: PARENTS WERE HIGHLY MOTIVATED BY THEIR FINANCIAL GOALS TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATING IN SPARKPOINT



Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17. Participants were asked “Which of the following motivated you to continue participating in SparkPoint?” and selected all response options that applied. Percentages represent the proportion of respondents who selected each response option out of the total number of respondents.

Logistical conveniences and relationships with staff and other parents helped to retain participants

The majority of survey respondents agreed that SparkPoint services were offered at a convenient location (98%) and time and day (94%). Moreover, they said attending SparkPoint workshops was easier because there was free child care (89%) and free dinner (78%). During client interviews, parents also mentioned the logistical conveniences, incentives, and support from staff/other parents as factors that motivated them.

Some participants stopped participating because they found jobs; others stopped because they did not have knowledge of their household finances

Client interviews revealed insights into less intuitive factors that may influence retention. Two clients found jobs, in part because of their involvement with SparkPoint, which kept them too busy to continue attending SparkPoint programming. Another client mentioned that some of her peers might have stopped attending because they did not know the details of their own household's finances: “I think the people who don't stick with the program, they're not the ones who are doing the money. They would say, ‘I have no idea how much my husband makes.’”

Client Perspective - During interviews, clients described what motivated them to continue participating in SparkPoint:

Financial Goals and Program Content

“If I hear about something that looks like it’s interesting and can be helpful to me and can contribute to my life, then I’m going to go for it.”

“For us it was a no brainer - free tax prep, people to tell you about credit. We didn’t have parents to teach us that. That’s something we’re teaching our children, constantly educating them on things that we didn’t learn. We didn’t have any knowledge of credit, didn’t know how to write a check; when we had the chance to receive all that knowledge, there was no way that we weren’t going to move forward.”

Logistical Conveniences and Incentives

“They gave babysitters. That’s the really good thing about the program. They always have babysitters. We can come without having to think about what I am going to do with the baby.”

“One of the things that really attracted me was that it was in the evening and it wasn’t a long period of time, just 1-1.5 hours. They did have childcare, which was really great, a lot of parents used it. And we had pizza a lot of times and salad.”

“Later on they came in and were talking about helping out with children’s college. That was a great incentive to have that happen... the parents who participated got an incentive of \$50-60 deposited into an account.”

Support from SPCS Staff and Other Parents

“I had kind of forgotten about the class and they called me to remind me.”

“[SPCS Staff Member] was trying to help me with everything. She helped me with the DACA program. I didn’t want to do it because I was afraid. But she helped me out. She has been a really good help. She has been helping me on every single step I have done.”

“I felt so comfortable, it just brought joy. I felt that I had found someone in my life that understood my shortcomings. She had tons of information and she was patient.”

SPCS IMPACT

Household Economic Improvement

About 8 out of 10 clients experienced tangible household economic improvements

SPCS participation was associated with improvements in a household's finances. Across all six sites, nearly 8 out of 10 measurable clients (78%) achieved at least 5% progress in at least one of the four measured areas: increasing income, building savings, improving credit score, or reducing debt (Table 4). This exceeded UWBA's goal of having this level of improvement for 70% of clients.

"I'm becoming debt free, I haven't had that feeling in over 50 years."

- SparkPoint Client

One-quarter of clients significantly increased their income

About one-quarter of measurable clients (23%) achieved 30% or more increase in their monthly income since their baseline assessment (Table 4). This came close to meeting UWBA's goal that at least 30% of clients will increase their income by 30% or more. Participant survey data aligned with this positive trend, with three-fourths of participants (75%) reporting they increased their income to some extent since participating in SparkPoint (Table 5).

TABLE 4: FAMILIES MADE STRIDES IMPROVING HOUSEHOLD FINANCES

SITE	NUMBER OF 16-17 MEASURABLE CLIENTS	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 30% INCREASE IN INCOME	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 30% INCREASE IN SAVINGS	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 5% PROGRESS IN AT LEAST ONE CATEGORY
Dover	58	12%	41%	67%
Phillips	20	25%	75%	90%
Searles	6	50%	50%	100%
Solano	31	39%	48%	87%
Taft	8	50%	25%	75%
Westlake	15	7%	33%	73%
Total	138	23%	46%	78%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=138), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Percentages are reflective of only 16-17 Measurable Clients. Categories include an increase in their monthly income, total savings, or credit score; or a reduction in household debt.

Nearly half of clients substantially increased their savings

Although UWBA did not set a specific goal related to savings, it is notable that close to half of SPCS measurable clients (46%) achieved at least a 30% increase in savings (Table 4). This demonstrates that clients were able to increase their savings even if their income did not increase, suggesting that SPCS supported clients in learning how to save more within their existing incomes.

Participants noted opening savings accounts and saving for big purchases

Participant survey data and client interview data provided further evidence of savings progress. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of clients reported opening a new savings account since participating in SparkPoint (Table 5). During the interviews, several parents proudly described how they saved for big family purchases, such as a house or a car. See the “Client Perspective” section on page 28 for detailed quotes from the client interviews.

TABLE 5: SPARKPOINT CLIENTS REPORTED IMPROVING THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATION

SURVEY ITEM	% AGREEMENT
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have reduced my debt.	80%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have increased my income.	75%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have increased my credit score.	69%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I opened a new savings account.	65%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have gotten a job.	45%

Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17. Represents the proportion of respondents who answered positively (*Agree* or *Strongly Agree*) to each survey item. Other response options included *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, and *Not Sure/Not Applicable*.

Almost half of surveyed participants reported getting a new job

Almost half of responding participants (45%) reported that they got a new job since participating in SparkPoint. Close to one-third of participants (31%) marked “Not sure/Not applicable” for this question, suggesting getting a new job may not have been a salient priority for many participants at their time of participation. For those clients who did want to find a job, client interview data demonstrated the significant impact employment can have on more than just finances. As one client noted, “I changed a lot with the job, because I was only the mom before, and now it’s like I’m me again, I feel really happy.”

Nearly all participants improved their financial knowledge, even if they did not experience measureable financial gains yet

Financial changes can take time. While not all participants tangibly improved their financial situation this year, nearly all participants experienced positive changes in their financial knowledge and mindset. More than 9 in 10 participants reported that they learned strategies to reduce their debt (92%), save money (91%), and/or increase their credit score (90%, Table 6). Furthermore, all interviewees said they had made financial behavioral changes based on what they learned in SPCS; these changes included budgeting, monitoring income and expenses, couponing, engaging all family members in cooking at home, and goal setting. This widespread improvement in financial knowledge and behaviors suggests that even clients who did not experience immediate financial progress have the skills and tools they need to make progress in the near future.

TABLE 6: SPARKPOINT CLIENTS LEARNED FINANCIAL STRATEGIES

SURVEY ITEM	% AGREEMENT
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to reduce my debt.	92%
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to save more money.	91%
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to increase my credit score.	90%

Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17. Represents the proportion of respondents who answered positively (*Agree* or *Strongly Agree*) to each survey item. Other response options included *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, and *Not Sure/Not Applicable*.

Client Perspective - During interviews, clients described changes in their finances, financial knowledge, and financial behaviors:

Financial Improvements

“My score started out at like 200, now it’s like 719. It means a lot to me. I’ve bought a car since then and I only have one more payment. This program helped me to clean my credit.”

“SparkPoint helped me apply for food stamps. I was approved in my first application and I got \$150/month.”

“I got my loans out of default. It’s less of a burden on my husband, because he’s been able to obtain credit. We’re able to move forward to try to buy a house. That’s amazing for us, to start from nothing.”

Financial Knowledge

“What I’m understanding now with credit cards, if I have an \$80 or \$100 bill, I need to pay the whole thing off now instead of paying off a little bit at a time.”

“She showed us how to do a food budget, and how to save money on the food budget. For example, see what’s on sale, look for coupons, how to spend less on food and more for other things, without sacrificing.”

“Learning how to deal with my credit. That to me was the highlight of the whole thing. I didn’t know we had 3 different credit bureaus that keep track of your spending.”

Financial Behaviors

“I pay more attention to what I’m spending because now I have a budget.”

“The most important is that now, I’m able to put away savings for the house and before that was very hard to do. If you plan ahead, you can make it all happen.”

“I let each one of [my family members], one day a week, choose what they want to eat, but I prepare it, so we’re not going out. Each one of them gets to pick, but then we all eat that food. I learned that in class, it was a saving strategy.”

Children's Academic Improvement

SPCS uses a two-generation approach

SPCS defines itself as a two-generation program. It integrates SparkPoint Centers with Community Schools to help families gain stable financial footing while supporting students' well-being and academic success. This is an explicit whole-family approach that focuses on services and opportunities for the parent and the child.⁵ Parents gain motivation to succeed from their children and vice versa; their efforts are mutually reinforcing.⁶

SPCS helped parents support their children's academic success

We found evidence that supported the theorized association between participation in SPCS and parents' ability to support children's academic success. SPCS parents became more involved with their child's school and teachers. Nearly all survey respondents (97%) said they were more actively involved in their child's school since participating in SPCS (Table 7). Moreover, most clients (93%) agreed that SPCS helped them feel more comfortable partnering with teachers and other school staff to understand and promote their child's academic success.

TABLE 7: SPCS CLIENTS LINKED FINANCES TO ACADEMICS

SURVEY ITEM	% AGREEMENT
Since participating in SparkPoint, I am more actively involved in my child's school.	97%
SparkPoint helps me feel more comfortable partnering with teachers and other school staff around my child's academic success.	93%
In SparkPoint workshops, I learn about the link between my family's financial health and my child's academic possibilities.	90%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have looked into college savings plans for my child.	86%

Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17. Represents the proportion of respondents who answered positively (*Agree* or *Strongly Agree*) to each survey item. Other response options included *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, and *Not Sure/Not Applicable*.

SPCS contributed to building a college-going culture within the family

Both clients and staff said that SPCS's workshops related to saving for college and long-term family goals increased the conversations parents had with their children about college. These conversations in turn contributed to building more of a college-going culture within the family. Survey data aligned with these observations, with 9 out of 10 parents (90%) reporting that SPCS helped them learn about the link between their family's financial health and their child's academic possibilities (Table 7). Additionally, more than 8 out of 10 parents (86%) said they looked into college savings plans since participating in SPCS.

⁵ Bento, A. *Strengthening Two-Generation Approaches through Family Engagement*, United Way Bay Area, 2016.

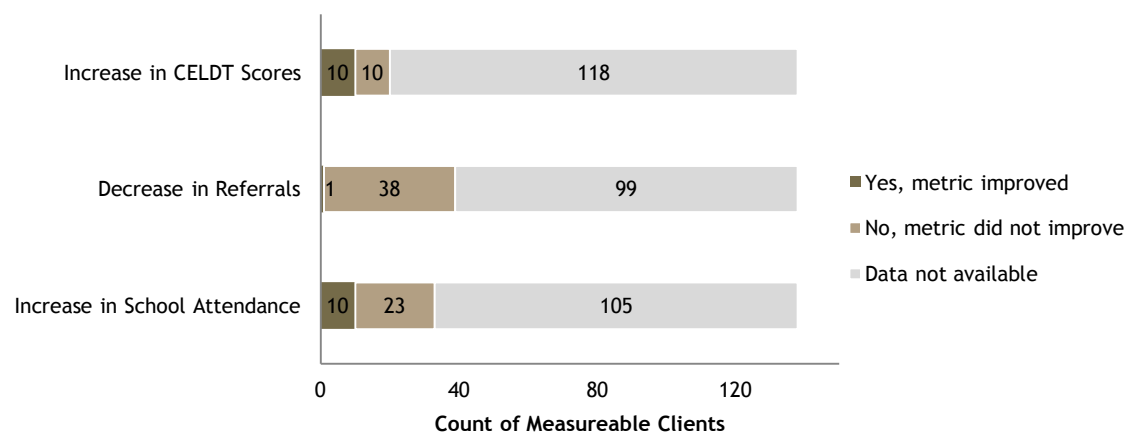
⁶ Mosle, A., Patel, N., & Stedron, J. (2014). Top ten for 2 gen: policy ideas and principles to advance two-generation efforts. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.

There was insufficient quantitative academic data to do further analysis

As a two-generation program, UWBA strives to track student academic outcomes alongside parent financial outcomes. The program theorizes a positive correlation between the level of parent financial improvements and the level of child improvements. Unfortunately, there was insufficient child academic data available to fully explore these questions. While there were 138 measureable clients (clients with financial data), less than one-third of them had any usable academic data. Some metrics had more data than others; for instance, 33 students had attendance data, but only three students had Grade Point Average (GPA) data. The quality of the academic data was also limited, with sites tracking metrics in different ways and multiple data points needing to be cleaned and aggregated.

Based on available academic data, close to one-third of children from SPCS families with data (10 out of 33) experienced increases in school attendance (Figure 6). Additionally, half of children from SPCS families with data (10 out of 20) experienced increases in their annual California English Language Development Test (CELDT) proficiency level. There was not a large enough sample of academic data available to draw generalizable conclusions about whether or not household financial improvements were correlated with child academic outcomes.

FIGURE 6: DATA ON ACADEMIC OUTCOMES WAS LIMITED



Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=138), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Nearly all families (38/39) who had pre and post referral data had zero referrals at both time points, and therefore couldn't be considered as decreasing in referrals.

Staff faced difficulties accessing meaningful student data

During SPCS staff interviews, several staff members described the difficulty they encountered attempting to access student data. Moreover, some questioned the utility of some of the metrics. For instance, many students start out with perfect school attendance so it is not possible to observe improvement. This will be a key topic for future evaluation cycles as the program becomes more established, outcomes become more refined, and data collection tools and strategies continue to improve.

Client Perspective - During interviews, clients described changes in their household's academic mindsets and behaviors:

"My little one didn't like to come to school. Since they see me going to school, now they want to be like Mommy. I feel proud of them. They are doing great in school. Before that they had bad grades but now they have good grades. The teachers talk to me about that. They have seen them improve."

"I try to be close to the teachers... Before I was like, 'Whatever, they are at school, I hope they will be fine.' Now I understand that we need to be in touch with the teachers. One class at [SPCS] we learned about how to talk to the teachers and give them the support they need."

"They've never been so determined to do well school. My oldest daughter is superseding everything. My boys are good at math. We instill in them, as long as you try, that's all that matters to us. They want to go to college, they want to see Mommy go to college. Our whole family is about trying to succeed. We have a better outlook on life."

"Now we can focus on our kids' education, work 1 on 1 with them when they come home from school. We have the financial stability now, we have credit, if we did need to buy something we could. We can provide for our kids, we can talk to them about their future."

"One thing that is priceless to me is my son said, 'Oh Mom, you are going to school at the same school I am!' It's rewarding for me because I feel like I am teaching him something."

Staff Perspective - During interviews, SPCS staff described observed changes in clients' attitudes and behaviors regarding their children's academic possibilities:

"Parents are more engaged. They are active in the sense that they're looking for ways to get involved in the school, trying to find ways to apply what they're learning. A lot of parents work minimum wage, but they're thinking ahead to saving for college, thinking about the future."

"It puts the possibility of college on the table when it wasn't before. [SPCS] increases the conversation about college."

Family Empowerment

SPCS empowered clients and their children in a mutually reinforcing cycle

In addition to the financial and academic benefits described in the prior sections, interviews with clients and staff indicated SPCS contributed to parent and child empowerment. Several parents described the importance of passing the new financial knowledge down to their children so their children will have stronger financial futures. Parents also described the sense of empowerment they felt by taking control of their finances and pursuing leadership opportunities that developed out of SPCS. Both staff and clients said that children noticed these changes and saw their parents as role models in a way that was mutually reinforcing to both parents and children. As one client said, “I’m inspired to inspire them.”

Client Perspective - During interviews, clients described empowerment benefits to their family after participating in SparkPoint:

“Since I start coming to the program, I am doing my homework, [my children] see me giving the classes, making the accounts. They have been noticing everything. My biggest one is noticing ‘Oh Mommy, you are studying like me. When I grow up I am going to be someone like you.’ That really makes me so happy.”

“I am teaching him responsibility... The other day he asked for chips and then he said, ‘Nevermind I forgot we are saving money, you hold on to that!’”

“One of the things I liked was a recognition letter we wrote to each of our children, and how we were going to support them, before our graduation. I felt so much empowerment after going through this and more confident approaching my children and empowering them.”

Staff Perspective - During interviews and focus groups, staff described observed empowerment benefits to families after participating in SparkPoint:

“For some people it’s very profound, there is fear and shame about their financial circumstances but they really have a physical and fiscal transformation. They look different, they carry themselves differently, they become more vocal and they want to share.”

“Kids see adults in a different way. They’re aware. They’re so happy for the parents when they graduate [from SPCS]. It warms my heart.”

“It’s been a goal to build capacity and parent empowerment. To see [SPCS] as a jumping-off point within the community. ... We’re hearing from families that they’re more goal focused, talking about what they’d like to do next.”

Contribution to Learning in the Field

SPCS enhances the full-service community schools model

The SPCS model contributes to learning in the field in that it introduces a two-generation approach and targeted, comprehensive financial education and assistance into the full-service community schools model. The participating SPCS sites each had a range of youth- and family-oriented services available but previously lacked a financial component. Collecting data on and evaluating this model contribute to an understanding of this relatively new niche in the community schools service menu.

SPCS shares its model with the field

In 2016-17, SPCS expanded its formal sharing with the field by making its model innovations available to others who can benefit. UWBA actively participates in Ascend at the Aspen Institute, a hub for breakthrough ideas and collaborations that move children and their parents toward educational success and economic security. In addition to Ascend, UWBA shares its published evaluation findings with the Siemer Institute for Family Stability, which works to prevent child homelessness for families with school aged children and reduce disruptive student mobility.

Moreover, UWBA convened staff from all six SPCS sites in fall 2016 and spring 2017 to share practices and learn from one another. In addition, all SPCS sites participated in UWBA's first annual Equity Forum in August 2017. During this forum, SPCS staff members were able to share the SPCS model with diverse stakeholders and connect with potential partners.

CONCLUSION

While SPCS remains a relatively new program, our evaluation uncovered some promising findings:

- All SPCS sites succeeded in offering some level of financial coaching, workshops, and services. Additionally sites supported parents in engaging in their child's education. At the same time, the SPCS program model was flexible enough that sites were able to customize the program model for each school's specific population and context.
- The six SPCS sites served 251 families, exceeding UWBA's annual goal of serving 240 families. Most participants (86%) decided to become clients.
- Almost 8 out of 10 measurable clients made tangible progress (at least 5% improvement) towards at least one of their financial goals: increasing income, building savings, improving credit score, or reducing debt.
- Nearly all clients experienced positive changes in their financial behaviors and knowledge. More than 9 in 10 participants reported that they learned strategies to reduce their debt, save money, and/or increase their credit score.
- Survey and interview data suggested an association between SPCS parent participation and the conditions to support children's academic success. Participants became more involved in their child's school, felt more comfortable in partnering with their child's teacher, and had more conversations with their children about college.
- Interviews with clients and staff indicated SPCS empowered clients and their children in a mutually reinforcing cycle. Parents passed their new financial knowledge down to their children. Parents also described the sense of empowerment they felt by taking control of their finances and pursuing leadership opportunities that developed out of SPCS. Both staff and clients said that children noticed these changes and saw their parents as role models in a way that was mutually reinforcing to both parents and children.

"Sparkpoint gave us hope."

- SparkPoint Participant

Next year the UWBA team plans to support SparkPoint Centers in strengthening their staff leadership, partnership development, data quality, and sustainability plans. Next year's evaluation will include all three of SparkPoint's program types: SparkPoint Community Schools; SparkPoint Community Colleges; and SparkPoint Regional Centers. Expanding the reach of the annual evaluation will provide a more robust view of the SparkPoint initiative as a whole.

Recommendations

The UWBA team continues to refine the SPCS model based on the learning from each cycle. We suggest UWBA consider the following recommendations as they embark on this process.

Additionally, UWBA should consider if some of these recommendations might also apply to its other SparkPoint models, in addition to the SparkPoint Community School model.

Essential Program Components

While SPCS can flourish in diverse environments, we identified several attributes that appear to be necessary for a site to have a successful SPCS program. We recommend UWBA staff explicitly require the following criteria in future site selections (if they are not already requirements) and identify ways to quickly respond to these challenges if they arise:

- **The principal must be supportive and actively involved in building buy-in and awareness among families, teachers, and school staff.** The school principals at Dover and Phillips were key players in launching the program and building buy-in among teachers and families. Taft had an engaged Community School Coordinator and Family Resource Center staff but without the support of the principal, still faced challenges integrating into the school.
- **A school staff member, who is trusted by families, needs to help promote SPCS.** Families were more receptive to the program when someone they already trusted referred them. This was usually the Community School Coordinator (Dover, Searles, and Taft), but could also be the principal (Phillips) or another administrator.
- **The school must have the capacity to prioritize SPCS.** Just as UWBA refers to clients being “SparkPoint-ready” before they can be expected to be successful in the program, schools also need to be “SparkPoint-ready.” A school cannot provide the infrastructure necessary to support SparkPoint if they are in crisis and focused on other priorities. Westlake and Solano experienced overall school instability that prevented school staff from engaging with the SPCS program.
- **The site must build sustainable systems that outlast specific relationships since staff turnover is common.** All but two sites had staffing gaps for their coordinator and/or coach positions at some point in 2016-17. Since each site does not have many SPCS staff members, every vacancy has a big impact on programming. For instance, both Dover and Westlake were unable to offer on-site coaching for extended periods of time. Additionally, Solano and Taft both experienced delays in programming and partnership development while they had vacant coordinator positions.

Program Components to Define

A key strength of the SPCS program model is that it is flexible and can be customized for each school's population and context. However, we recommend UWBA consider making certain elements of the model more defined and/or explicit. The following questions were recurring themes throughout our evaluation:

- **Who are SPCS sites expected serve?** Is the program intended to serve families with students at the host school exclusively? What about other families in the district? What about other families in the community? What about individuals without children?
- **What are retention expectations?** Are service goals for site based on any level of participation? Is the goal to have all participants become clients? Or is the goal to have individuals participate at whatever level is appropriate for the individual's and school's context? What are the retention goals for each stage? Should these goals be different for different sites?
- **Are sites expected to explicitly message the connection between household financial stability and children's academic success?** This year's workshops did not always include both components. For instance, Searles' workshops exclusively included financial content and Solano's workshops exclusively included child development and parenting strategies. We suggest UWBA provide sites with more guidance and support on the extent to which financial and academic support topics should be integrated.
- **Is the SPCS model intended for all grade levels?** Overall, the SPCS program was more successful at the elementary school sites than the middle school sites. A SPCS staff member said, "middle school might be the hardest. Parents are more engaged when students are in elementary school. In high school families are thinking about college." The number of total sites is too small to draw generalizable conclusions, but nonetheless, UWBA might want to think about how parents perceive the program at different grade levels.
- **What is the role of the SPCS site staff and what is the role of UWBA staff and other partners?** We suggest UWBA more clearly define partner roles. SPCS staff at one site expressed wanting more clear direction and guidance from UWBA on the program design. SPCS staff at two sites expressed delays in programming that were due to a lack of clarity around roles and when work with subcontractors could move forward.

Data Recommendations

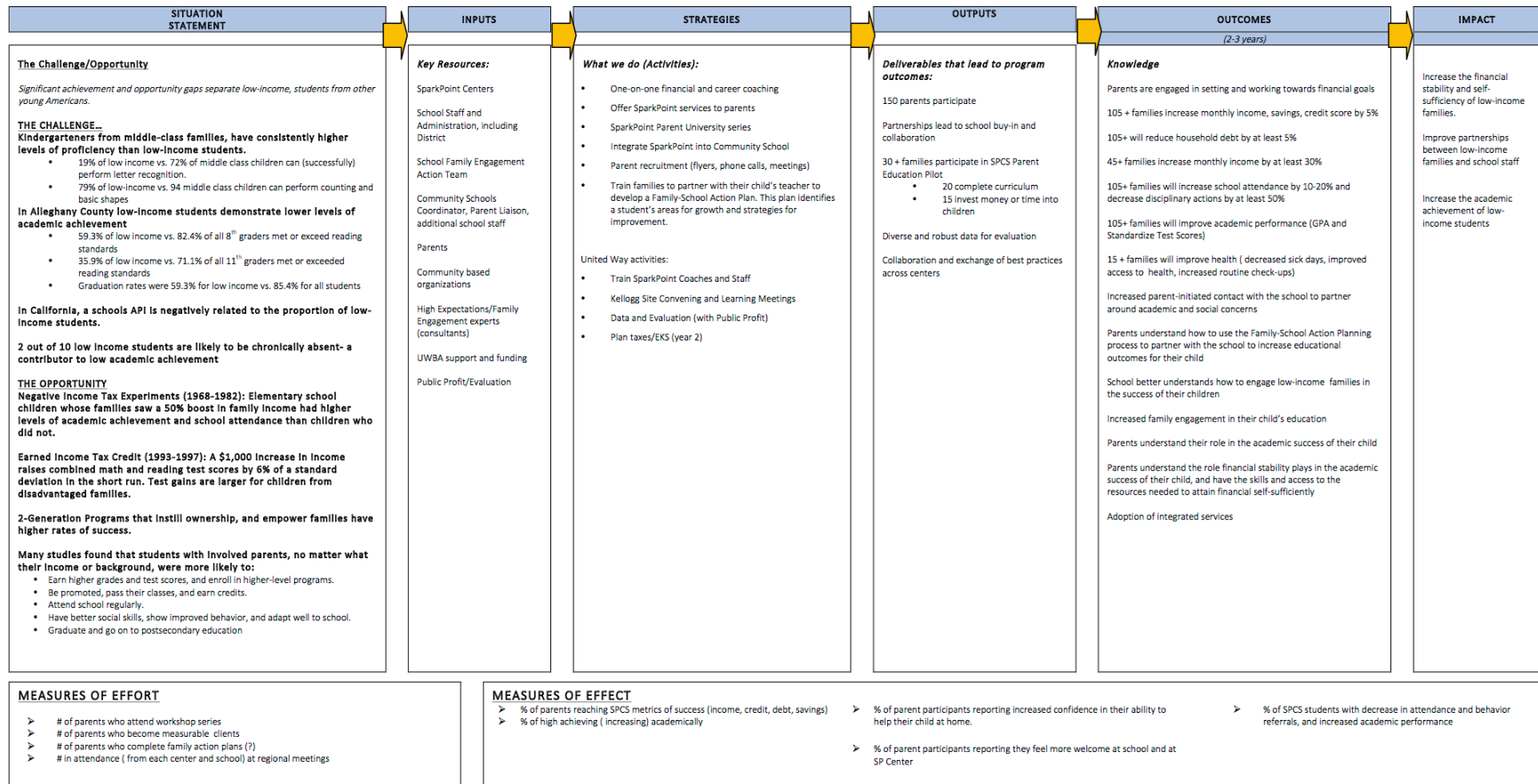
The SPCS model values rigorous tracking of outcomes for parents and children. Through our data collection process for the evaluation, we identified several ways SPCS sites can better track client outcome and participation data.

- **Support sites in using standardized ways to track participation.** Participation data is important for a full understanding of how the program is being implemented and how a participant's service and dosage mix might influence their outcomes. In this year's evaluation, we were unable to report on exact counts for Parent University participation, coaching participation, and participation from host school parents due to inconsistent data quality in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database. Sites used inconsistent methods to track data, which made it difficult to compare sites or even the same site over time. Additionally, sites often had incomplete or entirely missing data points. We recommended setting clear expectations on what data should be added and how it should be done. We also suggest doing monthly Quality Assurance checks to catch data quality issues early on and be able to provide SPCS staff with timely data support.
- **Work with sites to recognize and address common data collection challenges.** SPCS staff at two sites described some participants being hesitant or unable to provide data due to cultural barriers, fears related to their immigration status, and/or incomplete knowledge of their household's finances. SPCS staff at one site noted they were spending a significant amount of time trying to get participants to provide data and they would have rather been using that time to provide services. We suggest encouraging sites to share their data collection strategies with each other and providing sites with guidance on which data points are of the highest value.
- **Refine academic outcome metrics.** For the last two evaluation cycles, sites have had difficulties accessing student academic data. Only a small proportion of measureable clients had corresponding child academic data, and some of this data had quality issues. Even if more high quality data were available, SPCS staff at four sites expressed doubts that the current academic data metrics could capture SPCS's impact on children. SPCS staff at three sites noted that academic changes happen more gradually over time and are influenced by many outside sources. Additionally, SPCS staff at two sites noted most of the children started out with strong attendance outcomes and no referrals, so it was not possible to measure improvement on those metrics. Finally, a SPCS staff member suggested it would be better if the ETO database had a way to track behavior changes. Since child outcomes are an important aspect of the SPCS two-generation approach, we recommend conducting a discovery process on how to improve tracking the academic metrics and to work with SPCS staff and participants to identify additional measures that might provide more meaningful data about SPCS's impact on child outcomes.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: SPCS Logic Model

SparkPoint Community Schools (SPCS) Logic Model – INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH INCREASED FAMILY ECONOMIC STABILITY AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



Appendix B: Client Survey Results

TABLE B-1. CLIENT SURVEY: RACE

RACE/ETHNICITY	N	%	RACE/ETHNICITY	N	%
Latino/a	81	87%	Middle Eastern/Arab	0	0%
African American	10	11%	Native American	0	0%
Asian	1	1%	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0%
Decline to state	1	1%	Multi-Racial	0	0%
Caucasian	0	0%	Other	0	0%

Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17.

TABLE B-2. CLIENT SURVEY: GENDER

GENDER	N	%
Female	90	97%
Male	3	3%

Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17.

TABLE B-3. CLIENT SURVEY: CHILD'S GRADE

GRADE	N	%
K, 1, or 2	45	52%
3, 4, or 5	23	27%
6, 7, or 8	15	17%
9, 10, 11, or 12	3	4%

Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17. If respondent had more than one child at the school, they were instructed to pick the grade of their youngest child.

TABLE B-4. CLIENT SURVEY: RESPONSE RATES ACROSS SITES

SURVEY ITEM	% AGREE	% DISAGREE	% NOT SURE /N/A
SparkPoint services are offered at a time and day that is convenient for me.	94%	2%	4%
SparkPoint services are offered at a convenient location for me.	98%	0%	2%
It was easier for me to attend SparkPoint workshops because free child care was provided.	89%	0%	11%
It was easier for me to attend SparkPoint workshops because free dinner was provided.	78%	7%	15%
In SparkPoint, I learn about the link between my family's financial health and my child's academic possibilities.	90%	0%	10%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have looked into college savings plans for my child.	86%	5%	10%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I am more actively involved in my child's school.	97%	1%	2%
SparkPoint helps me feel more comfortable partnering with teachers and other school staff around my child's academic success.	93%	0%	7%

SURVEY ITEM	% AGREE	% DISAGREE	% NOT SURE /N/A
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to increase my credit score.	90%	2%	7%
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to save more money.	91%	2%	7%
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to reduce my debt.	92%	0%	8%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have increased my income.	75%	10%	15%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have gotten a job.	45%	24%	31%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have increased my credit score.	69%	6%	24%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I opened a new savings account.	65%	10%	25%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have reduced my debt.	80%	8%	12%
Since participating in SparkPoint, my family's financial health is more important to me.	98%	0%	2%
SparkPoint participants receive recognition from the school.	85%	2%	13%
The school principal is involved with SparkPoint events.	68%	14%	18%

Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17.

TABLE B-5. CLIENT SURVEY: RESPONSE RATES BY SITES, ONLY % POSITIVE RESPONSE

SURVEY ITEM	DOVER (N=45)	PHILLIPS (N=16)	SEARLES (N=7)	TAFT (N=16)	WESTLAKE (N=10)	TOTAL (N=96)
SparkPoint services are offered at a time and day that is convenient for me.	98%	94%	100%	88%	80%	94%
SparkPoint services are offered at a convenient location for me.	100%	100%	100%	100%	80%	98%
It was easier for me to attend SparkPoint workshops because free child care was provided.	93%	93%	71%	93%	70%	89%
It was easier for me to attend SparkPoint workshops because free dinner was provided.	93%	46%	50%	93%	50%	78%
In SparkPoint, I learn about the link between my family's financial health and my child's academic possibilities.	93%	100%	100%	88%	50%	90%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have looked into college savings plans for my child.	95%	87%	100%	79%	44%	86%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I am more actively involved in my child's school.	100%	100%	100%	93%	80%	97%
SparkPoint helps me feel more comfortable partnering with teachers and other school staff around my child's academic success.	93%	93%	100%	94%	90%	93%
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to increase my credit score.	96%	94%	100%	93%	50%	90%
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to save more money.	96%	94%	100%	93%	50%	91%
In SparkPoint, I learn ways to reduce my debt.	100%	100%	100%	88%	40%	92%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have increased my income.	77%	93%	100%	73%	20%	75%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have gotten a job.	43%	67%	100%	36%	20%	45%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have increased my credit score.	83%	62%	100%	54%	30%	69%

SURVEY ITEM	DOVER (N=45)	PHILLIPS (N=16)	SEARLES (N=7)	TAFT (N=16)	WESTLAKE (N=10)	TOTAL (N=96)
Since participating in SparkPoint, I opened a new savings account.	80%	69%	100%	50%	11%	65%
Since participating in SparkPoint, I have reduced my debt.	93%	88%	100%	53%	40%	80%
Since participating in SparkPoint, my family's financial health is more important to me.	100%	100%	100%	100%	80%	98%
SparkPoint participants receive recognition from the school.	93%	94%	100%	87%	30%	85%
The school principal is involved with SparkPoint events.	73%	94%	86%	47%	20%	68%

Source: Client survey (N=96), 2016-17. Solano had 2 survey responses, and therefore is not represented in this table to protect the anonymity of the respondents. The total includes Solano responses. Represents the proportion of respondents who answered positively (*Agree* or *Strongly Agree*) to each survey item. Other response options included *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, and *Not Sure/Not Applicable*.

Appendix C: Client Participation and Demographics

TABLE C-1. TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS/CLIENTS BY SITE

SITE	16-17 PARTICIPANTS	16-17 CLIENTS	16-17 MEASURABLE CLIENTS
Dover	75	75	58
Phillips	29	28	20
Searles	16	9	6
Solano	60	51	31
Taft	35	16	8
Westlake	36	36	15
Total	251	215	138

Source: SPCS ETO Data (N=251), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017.

TABLE C-2. ETHNICITY BY SITE

SITE	# OF FAMILIES WITH AVAILABLE DATA	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ASIAN	CAUCASIAN	LATINO	OTHER
Dover	27	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Phillips	11	0%	0%	0%	91%	9%
Searles	6	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Solano	16	56%	6%	13%	25%	0%
Taft	0	-	-	-	-	-
Westlake	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	64	19%	3%	3%	73%	2%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=64), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. * Not reported to protect anonymity of participants in groups with fewer than 5 participants. These participants are included in the overall total.

TABLE C-3. GENDER BY SITE

SITE	# OF FAMILIES WITH AVAILABLE DATA	MALE	FEMALE
Dover	27	7%	93%
Phillips	14	14%	86%
Searles	6	17%	83%
Solano	18	22%	78%
Taft	0	-	-
Westlake	*	*	*
Total	83	11%	89%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=83), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. * Not reported to protect anonymity of participants in groups with fewer than 5 participants. These participants are included in the overall total.

TABLE C-4. HOUSING STATUS AT BASELINE ASSESSMENT BY SITE

SITE	# OF FAMILIES WITH AVAILABLE DATA	CURRENTLY WITHOUT HOUSING	LIVE WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS	OWNS A HOME	RENTING	SECTION 8 OR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING
Dover	25	0%	8%	20%	72%	0%
Phillips	13	0%	0%	23%	77%	0%
Searles	*	*	*	*	*	*
Solano	0	-	-	-	-	-
Taft	0	-	-	-	-	-
Westlake	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	46	4%	4%	17%	69%	4%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=46), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. * Not reported to protect anonymity of participants in groups with fewer than 5 participants. These participants are included in the overall total.

Appendix D: Household Financial Outcomes

TABLE D-1. FIVE PERCENT PROGRESS IN FINANCIAL CATEGORIES BY SITE

SITE	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 5% INCREASE IN INCOME	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 5% INCREASE IN SAVINGS	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 5% INCREASE IN CREDIT	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 5% DECREASE IN DEBT	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 5% PROGRESS IN ONE OF FOUR AREAS
Dover	19%	55%	17%	14%	67%
Phillips	55%	80%	0%	25%	90%
Searles	50%	67%	33%	33%	100%
Solano	52%	55%	55%	45%	87%
Taft	63%	25%	25%	0%	75%
Westlake	13%	47%	33%	33%	73%
Total	35%	57%	26%	25%	78%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=138), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Percentages are reflective of only 16-17 Measurable Clients.

TABLE D-2. THIRTY PERCENT PROGRESS IN FINANCIAL CATEGORIES BY SITE

SITE	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 30% INCREASE IN INCOME	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 30% INCREASE IN SAVINGS	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 30% INCREASE IN CREDIT	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 30% DECREASE IN DEBT	ACHIEVED AT LEAST 30% PROGRESS IN ONE OF FOUR AREAS
Dover	12%	41%	14%	12%	55%
Phillips	25%	75%	0%	10%	75%
Searles	50%	50%	0%	33%	83%
Solano	39%	48%	19%	39%	77%
Taft	50%	25%	25%	0%	63%
Westlake	7%	33%	0%	33%	47%
Total	23%	46%	12%	20%	64%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=138), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Percentages are reflective of only 16-17 Measurable Clients.

Appendix E: Child Academic Outcomes

TABLE E-1. FAMILIES WITH AN INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE BY SITE

SITE	# OF FAMILIES WITH AVAILABLE DATA	# OF FAMILIES WITH INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE	% OF FAMILIES WITH INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE
Dover	0	-	-
Phillips	15	5	33%
Searles	0	-	-
Solano	15	5	33%
Taft	*	*	*
Westlake	*	*	*
Total	33	10	30%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=33), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Percentage of families with an increase is calculated out of total families with pre and post data for at least one child. A family was considered to have an increase if at least one of their children had more than a 1% increase in attendance. * Not reported to protect anonymity of participants in groups with fewer than 5 participants. These participants are included in the overall total.

TABLE E-2. FAMILIES WITH A DECREASE IN REFERRALS BY SITE

SITE	# OF FAMILIES WITH AVAILABLE DATA	# OF FAMILIES WITH DECREASE IN REFERRALS	% OF FAMILIES WITH DECREASE IN REFERRALS
Dover	0	-	-
Phillips	21	0	0%
Searles	0	-	-
Solano	15	1	7%
Taft	0	-	-
Westlake	*	*	*
Total	39	1	3%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=39), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Percentage of families with a decrease is calculated out of total families with pre and post data for at least one child. A family was considered to have a decrease if at least one

of their children had a decrease in number of referrals. Nearly all families (38/39) who had pre and post referral data had zero referrals at both time points, and therefore couldn't be considered as decreasing in referrals.

* Not reported to protect anonymity of participants in groups with fewer than 5 participants. These participants are included in the overall total.

TABLE E-3. FAMILIES WITH AN INCREASE IN CELDT SCORES BY SITE

SITE	# OF FAMILIES WITH AVAILABLE DATA	# OF FAMILIES WITH INCREASE IN CELDT SCORE	% OF FAMILIES WITH INCREASE IN CELDT SCORE
Dover	9	0	0%
Phillips	6	5	83%
Searles	0	-	-
Solano	*	*	*
Taft	0	-	-
Westlake	0	-	-
Total	20	10	50%

Source: SPCS ETO Data (n=20), July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. CELDT scores are reported as the overall proficiency level. An increase in CELDT score is calculated as a positive change in proficiency level. Percentage of families with an increase is calculated out of total families with pre and post data for at least one child. A family was considered to have an increase if at least one of their children an increase in score. * Not reported to protect anonymity of participants in groups with fewer than 5 participants. These participants are included in the overall total.

Appendix F: Client Interview Protocol

Participant Interview Questions

- Tell me about your family. How old are your children?
- What has your experience with SparkPoint been like so far?
- We are talking with parents at six different SparkPoint sites. It is set up a little differently at each school. How is it set up at this school? (Offerings? Connected with other school services? School staff involved?)
- What activities have you done with SparkPoint? (Workshops, Graduation, 1:1 Coaching)
- Why did you choose to participate in SparkPoint?
- What motivated you to continue participating in SparkPoint? / What prevented you from continuing to participate?
- What parts of SparkPoint have been useful to you? What parts have not been useful?
 - What is the most important thing you've learned?
- What changes have you seen since being in SparkPoint?
 - In your family?
 - In your finances?
 - In your child?
- If you were asked to give advice to SparkPoint on how to be even better, what would you suggest?
- If you could use one word to describe SparkPoint, what would it be?
- Is there anything more you like us to know about?

Appendix G: Staff Interview Protocol

Staff Interview Questions

- What is your role here? How long have you been in this role?
- We are talking with staff at six different SPCS sites. It is set up a little differently at each school. How is it set up at this school?
 - What activities are offered? (Workshops, Graduation, 1:1 Coaching)
 - What kinds of coaching? What kinds of classes? What kinds of services?
 - Is there an ordered path all parents follow?
 - Is it drop-in or a set series?
 - Is it a cohort model?
 - How often are these services offered? (i.e., cohort every semester?)
 - How popular are each of the activities/services?
- Has your school's SPCS model changed since it started?
- In what ways has SPCS integrated itself into the school site?
 - How is it connected with other school services?
 - Does your site have a Parent University? If so, what is its relationship to SPCS?
 - How knowledgeable are school/district staff about SPCS at the different leadership levels (e.g., Principals, Teachers, Coordinators, Administrators)?
- Does your site have a Steering Committee? If so, what role does it play?
- What is the SPCS program's relationship like with the larger SparkPoint Center?
 - In what ways is the experience for families similar in both places?
 - In what ways is it different?
 - Do parents recognize the SparkPoint brand?
- In what ways does your site use a 2-generation approach?
- What is the most common change you have seen SPCS have on:
 - households' financial behavior and choices?
 - households' finances and economic situation?
 - parent engagement with the school and other services?
 - children of participants?
- Have you seen SPCS have an impact on children's academic performance and school attendance? In what ways?
- Any other important elements of your program design you would like to share? Is there anything more you would like us to know about?

Appendix H: Focus Group Protocol

Fall Focus Group Questions

- How is SPCS integrated with other services offered at your school?
- How knowledgeable are school district staff about SPCS at the different leadership levels (e.g. Principals, Teachers, Coordinators, Admins)?
- In what ways does your site use a 2-generation approach?
- Any other important elements of your program design you would like to share?

Spring Focus Group Questions

- In what ways do SparkPoint community school services benefit students?
- What challenges did your site face this year and what changes did/will you make as a result?
- What is one way SparkPoint could be further integrated into your school site?
- What is a key strategy your site used to engage families with SparkPoint?
- What types of UWBA technical assistance would most benefit your site next year?
- If you were to give one piece of advice to someone just starting to coordinate SparkPoint at a community school, what advice would you give?