

YESS

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS



Strategic Plan 2015–2018

YESS...Gateway to Collaboration with Youth Serving Agencies in East Palo Alto & Belle Haven/eastern Menlo Park



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photo courtesy of East Palo Alto Youth Action Team

OVERVIEW

Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (**YESS**) members engaged in a strategic planning process (**SPP**) from June 2014 to January 2015. The decision to conduct the SPP was prompted by discussions held by the YESS Direct Services Group (**DSG**) Steering Committee (**SC**), which pointed to the need to update YESS informational documents and chart a course for the initiative's growth and evolution over the next three years. Facilitated by external consultant Shiree Teng, the YESS SPP comprised the following major activities: a series of six YESS DSG SC meetings; three meetings of the DSG full membership; seven focus groups conducted with young people in the East Palo Alto (**EPA**) community, as well as with Latino/a, African American and Pacific Islander parents and residents, and seven one-on-one interviews conducted with external stakeholders. At a DSG meeting held on January 20, 2015, YESS members unanimously approved all elements produced by the strategic planning process, as summarized herein.

YESS leadership, including One East Palo Alto (**OEPA**) as convener, the YESS DSG Steering Committee and the YESS Policy Group, is grateful to SPP funding partners, an anonymous foundation donor and Peery Foundation, for supporting this process with financial resources and engaged participation. Such support ensured that the SPP was successful in achieving all planned goals and outcomes.



photo courtesy of Mural, Music and Arts Project

Overview (cont'd.)

The sections that follow present major components of the YESS strategic plan as developed through activities conducted.

YESS Mission

YESS is a network of organizations and institutions dedicated to ensuring that East Palo Alto and Belle Haven/eastern Menlo Park children, youth and young adults, ages 0 – 24, are able to achieve their full potential through education, employment and a healthy community.

YESS Vision

Our vision is a thriving community where all children, youth, families and residents are engaged, connected, healthy and economically self-sufficient.

YESS Core Values

The core values that guide how YESS members work with each other and in community are as follows:

- Collaboration
- Focus on children, youth and young adults
- Inclusiveness
- Accountability
- Continuous improvement
- Sustainability

YESS History and Unique Role

Originally established by OEPA in 2000 as the Youth and Young Adults Working Group, YESS has evolved over the past 15 years to become the largest multi-sector collaborative in EPA and Belle Haven/eastern Menlo Park. Today, YESS is uniquely positioned to create transformative change in the community by being a force for educational, social, political and economic innovation.

YESS addresses the needs of children, youth and families in the following ways:

- Bringing together 45+ local public and nonprofit agencies as members,
- Aligning, growing and streamlining existing services, and
- Linking and using data to improve practice and policy and measuring results.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

East Palo Alto is a culturally rich community located in the heartland of northern California's Silicon Valley. A geographically small community of 2.5 square miles, populated with almost 30,000 people, EPA and the neighboring area of eastern Menlo Park together represent a diverse target area whose largest ethnic groups are Latino/as, African Americans and Pacific Islanders. Our residents speak various native languages and many have distinct immigrant experiences. Target area residents include many individuals with deep roots in and a long history of community activism. Many of our families are young and culturally distinct, and/or live in multigenerational households. They work hard and believe in building a better life for themselves and their children.

Our community has a huge asset in the sheer number of organizations focused on serving residents' needs, including community-based nonprofits, public sector agencies and representatives of a strong faith-based sector. These entities also serve as cultural ambassadors and offer a rich array of civic engagement and youth leadership development opportunities. As still another asset, our community has received generous support from foundations and donors for innovative programs and, at the County level, benefits greatly from the support and advocacy of our 4th District representative, Supervisor Warren Slocum and his staff.

Despite the assets listed above and many more, EPA and Belle Haven/eastern Menlo Park are a historically underserved and under-resourced target area. While San Mateo County residents enjoy some of the highest

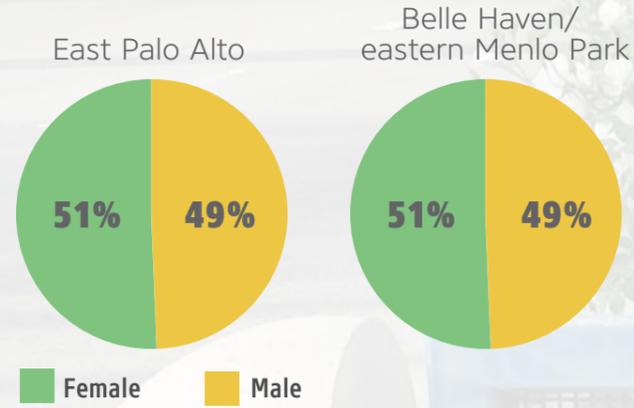
Many of our families are young and culturally distinct. They work hard and believe in building a better life for themselves and their children.

household incomes in the state and the country, our community has noticeably been left out of upward trends of economic prosperity commonly associated with Silicon Valley innovation and wealth. According to 2010 Census data and various San Mateo County and nonprofit research reports, a majority of children and youth from birth to 18 and their families live in poverty. Only one out of three children has gone to preschool. Third grade reading scores are the lowest in San Mateo County. Not surprisingly, a disproportionately high number of teenagers drop out from Sequoia Union High School District before they turn 18, with bleak employment prospects. Many young adults, ages 18-24, are disconnected from community resources and languish with serious un-/under-employment. Many suffer from undiagnosed and untreated mental health issues resulting from first-hand experience with trauma and violence. Often, parents or caregivers are working long hours and/or have to hold down one or more jobs, leaving them little time to spend with their children. The pie charts on the following page further illustrate selected demographic characteristics of YESS' target area (Pie charts were created based on Census 2010 demographics found at http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml).

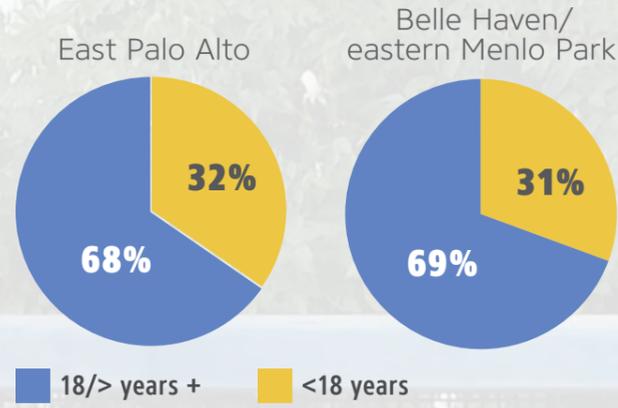
YESS TARGET AREA

DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER

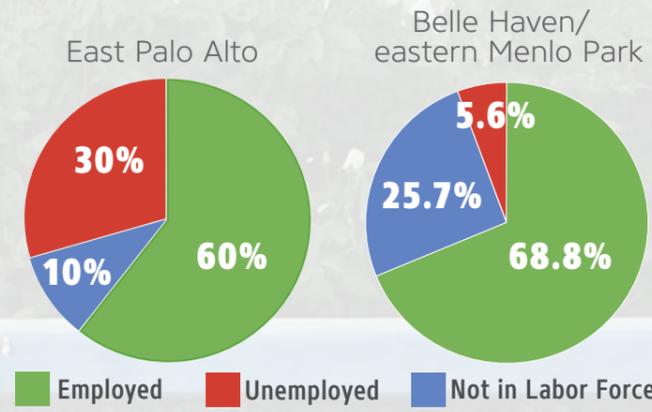


POPULATION BY AGE (a)



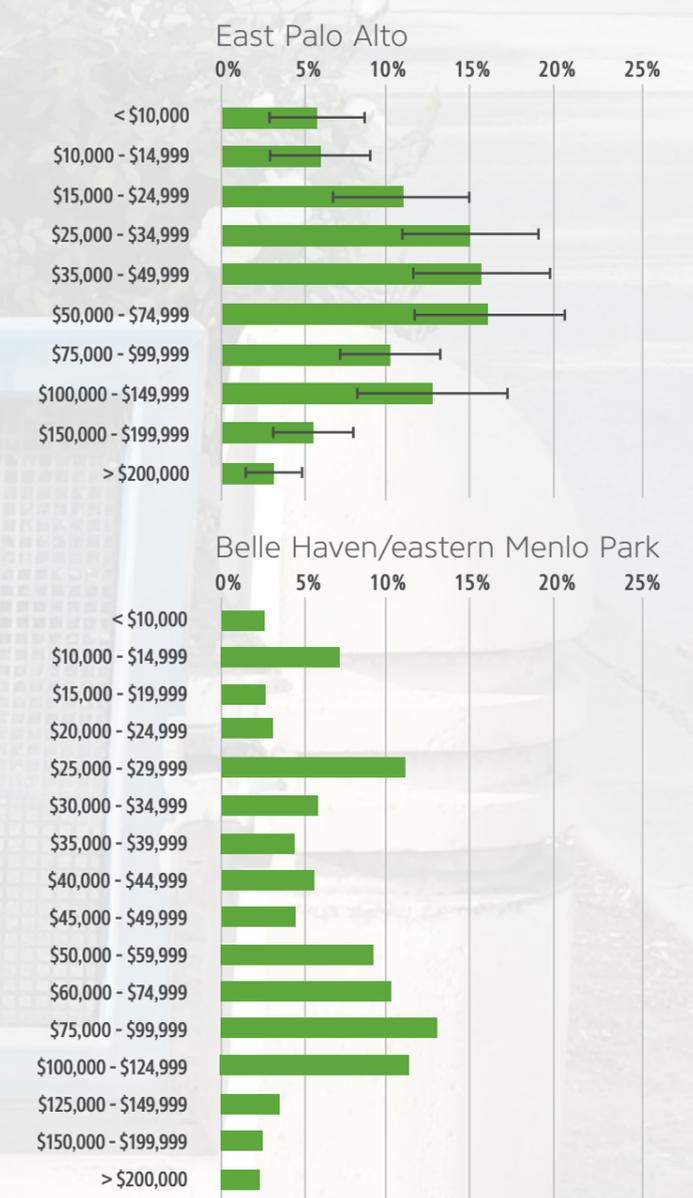
Source: 2010 Census Demographic Profile

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

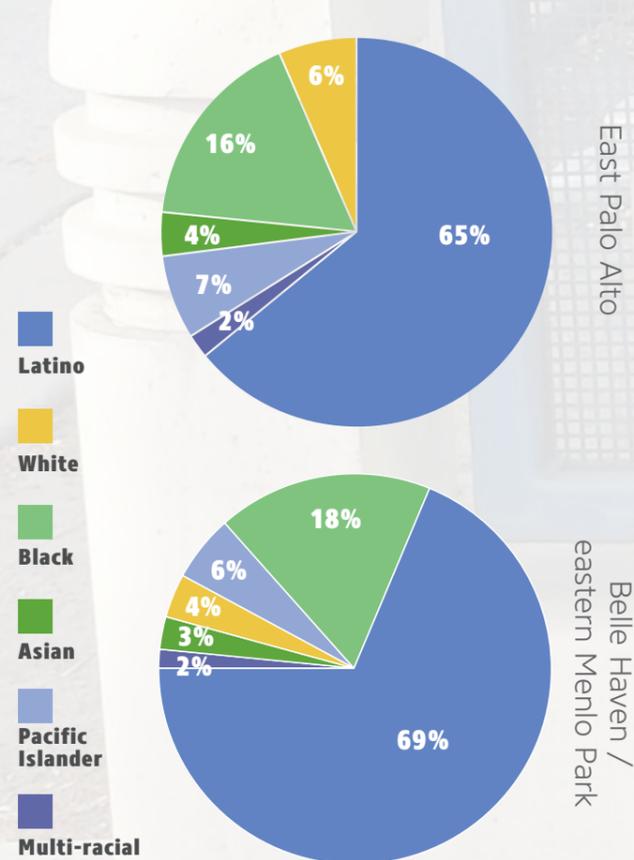


Note: Results pertain to the population 16 years and over. Results reflect a representative sample with margin of error of up to +/-4 percentage points. Source: American Community Survey 2013, 3-year Demographic Profile 3.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

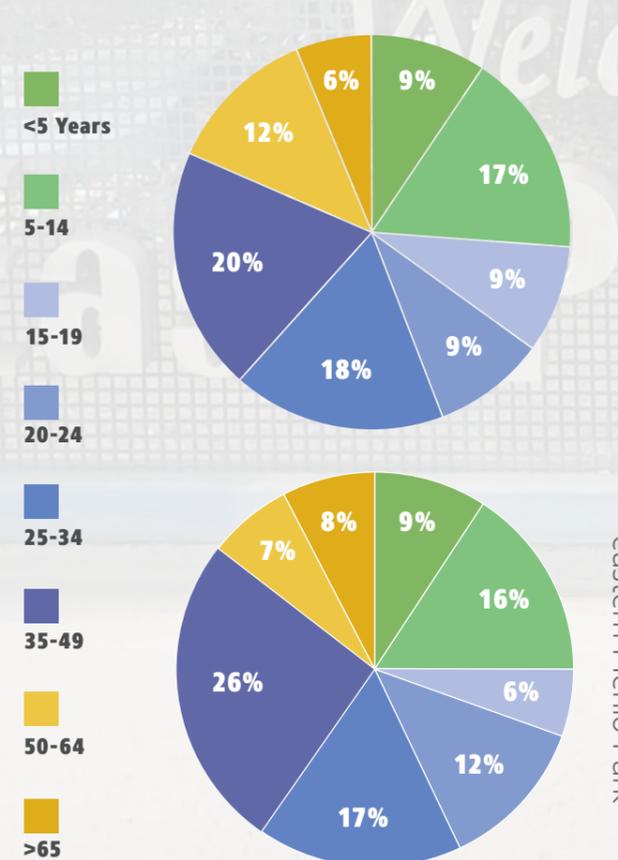


RACE / ETHNICITY



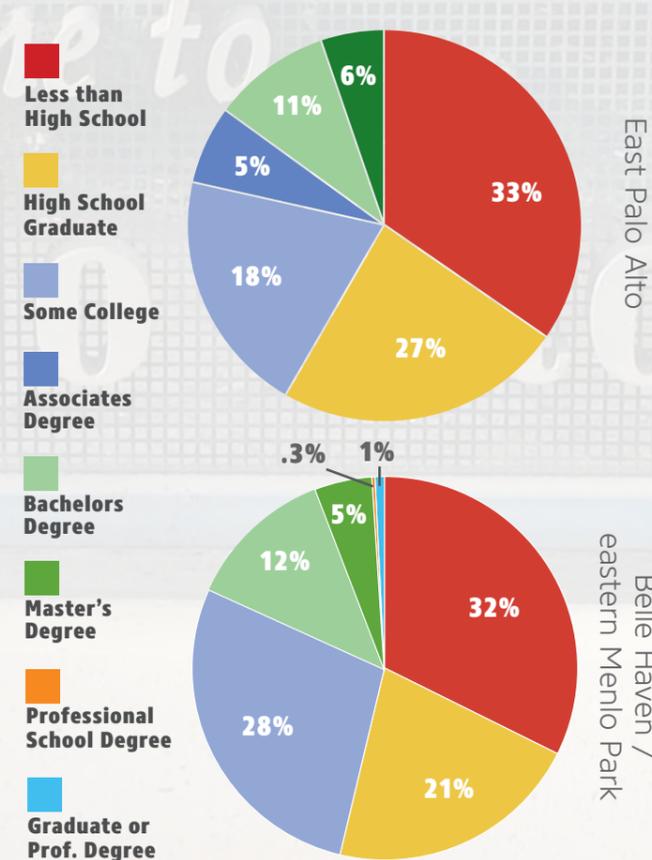
Source: 2010 Census Demographic Profile

POPULATION BY AGE (b)



Source: 2010 Census Demographic Profile

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



Note: Results pertain to the population 25 years and over. Results reflect a representative sample with margin of error of up to +/-4 percentage points. Source: American Community Survey 2013, 3-year Demographic Profile 2.

In context of these assets and challenges facing our community, YESS has an unprecedented opportunity to bring about a better quality of life for children, youth, young adults and families through the collaborative efforts of its member organizations. Such efforts will achieve maximum success if based on applying emerging principles of collective impact to implement quality of life improvement initiatives.

YESS Opportunities and Work Ahead



Opportunities for transformative work to be conducted by YESS going forward include the following:

- Facilitating the work of over 100 nonprofit organizations and educational institutions and catalyzing a level of impact that can be generated only by working collaboratively with a collective impact framework;
- Partnering more with the private sector in ways that lead to stronger mutual understanding, and result in more jobs, internships and mentors for our young adults and families;
- Using the strength of our voice and collective will to inspire a clearer vision for future community-wide growth that will guide more effective public policies, and
- Articulating and lifting up relevant evidence-based practices with children, youth, young adults and families so as to leverage the talents and strengths in our community.

The residents of our community are resilient in spite of the trauma and stressors they face. YESS is in a unique position to help overcome fragmentation, disparities and inequities within our community and bring about measurable and transformative change by working together with a unified vision for the future.

Financial Sustainability

Throughout its history, YESS has functioned as a project of and been financially supported by OEPA through in-kind staffing and other support. Moving forward,

Using the strength of our voice and collective will to inspire a clearer vision for future community-wide growth that will guide more effective public policies

YESS will remain as a project of OEPA, but will strive to be financially sustainable by a combination of institutional and nonprofit organization membership dues, foundation (private, community and corporate) grants, strategic partnerships and donor cultivation and stewardship.

YESS Governance Structure

OEPA will continue to act as a backbone organization for YESS, providing infrastructure and other critical supports. In this oversight and coordinating role, OEPA will help build sustainability-based capacity building for YESS by providing core staffing, facilitation and administrative support for focus area work groups and governance. OEPA will also continue to 1) coordinate and play lead roles in fundraising; 2) make sure YESS has appropriate facilities for membership meetings; 3) coordinate and oversee all external relations and partnerships, including media and communications as well as all internal membership communications; and 4) provide linkages and support for ongoing evaluation and other areas to be determined by YESS leadership.

OEPA's central coordinating role will be led by the YESS Direct Services Group Steering Committee and advised by a YESS Advisory Group.

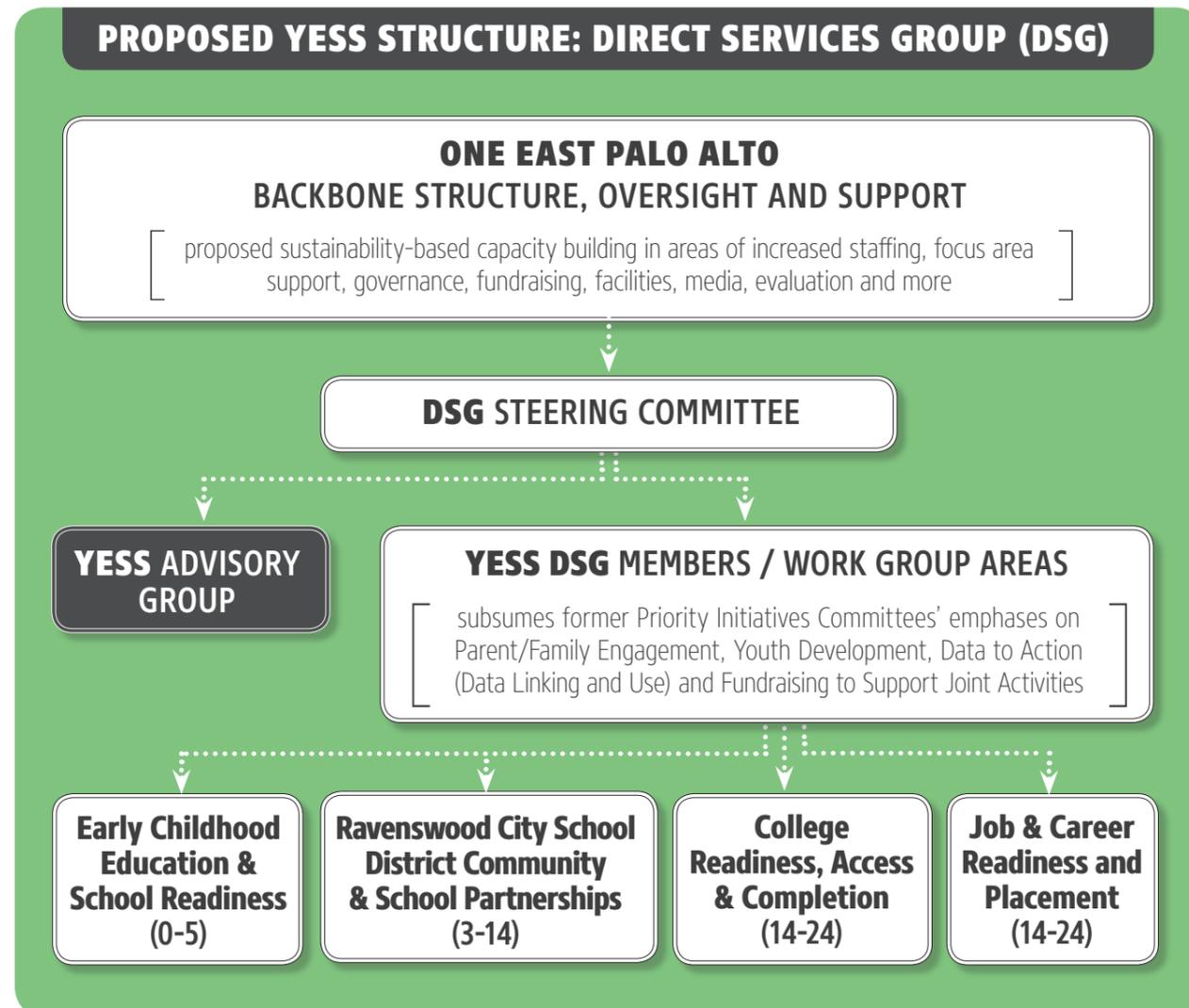
Opportunities and Work Ahead (cont'd.)

Under the DSG Steering Committee's leadership, there will be four priority YESS Focus Areas whose activities will be conducted by and through work groups:

- Early Childhood Education and School Readiness (0–5)
- Ravenswood City School District Community & School Partnerships (3–14)
- College Readiness, Access and Completion (14–24)
 - » High School Graduation
 - » College Readiness and Completion
- Job and Career Readiness and Placement (14–24)

These work groups are comprised of YESS members. The goals of the work groups are to identify key goals and indicators for change in their area, support one another, establish a seamless resource and referral network, streamline services, reduce duplication, and identify critical gaps in meeting the needs of children and youth in the community.

YESS structure components are depicted in overview in the graphic below.



YESS Outcomes

Long-term Outcomes

By 2035, YESS intends to achieve the following long-term outcomes:

All East Palo Alto and Belle Haven/eastern Menlo Park children, youth and young adults ages 0-24

- Graduate from high school, ready for college and/or career
- Experience healthy, safe, supportive pathways to adulthood

MONITORING & MEASURING. The YESS Steering Committee and Direct Services Group members will collaborate on planning and implementing strategies for monitoring and measuring progress toward achieving YESS Long-term Outcomes.

Intermediate Outcomes

By 2025, YESS envisions achievement of outcomes listed below on three levels—systems, organizational, and individual.

SYSTEMS LEVEL:

- Sustainable infrastructure and model
- Resources aligned
- Districts and CBOs link data to continue to improve programs and services

ORGANIZATION LEVEL:

- YESS organizations provide increasingly high quality programming and education
- Organizations effectively refer/link children, youth, young adults and families to targeted/appropriate resources and opportunities including health and mental health
- Organizations collect and use data consistently to improve practice

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL (Sample indicator areas—specifics to be set by action teams):

- Increased school attendance rates
- Increased graduation rates
- Increased parent engagement
- Increased youth engagement
- Increased number and diversity of job and career placements
- Increased access to and use of health services including mental health

MONITORING & MEASURING. The YESS Steering Committee and Direct Services Group members will collaborate on planning and implementing strategies for monitoring and measuring progress toward achieving YESS Intermediate Outcomes.

Short-term Outcomes

By 2018, YESS short-term outcomes are as follows:

SYSTEMS LEVEL:

- Stable and engaged network of partnerships with organizations serving children, youth, young adults and families
- Increased resources for infrastructure and cross-agency work to reach shared goals
- Increased coordination among community-based organizations (CBO), districts, city and county
- Clear baseline data identified, along with ways to measure and report progress
- Increased use of data to inform planning and drive improvement across agencies

ORGANIZATION LEVEL:

- Members increase capacity to provide children and their families with diverse and comprehensive programs, services and supports in coordinated and efficient way
- Member cross-agency teams set goals and indicators, and implement strategies to “move the needle”
- Members improve data collection and use of data

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL:

- Increased knowledge of and improved access to high quality programs and opportunities
- Decrease in barriers to learning and employment
- Increased participation (attendance) in school and program settings among all children, youth and young adults—including re-entry, out of school, etc.

MONITORING & MEASURING. The YESS Steering Committee and Direct Services Group members will collaborate on planning and implementing strategies for monitoring and measuring progress toward achieving YESS Long-term Outcomes.

Collective Impact Strategies and Activities

There are four essential strategies and activities for YESS as listed below.

Collaboration and Shared Leadership (OEPA/Steering Committee)

- Implementing Collective Impact model
- Communicating clearly and consistently
- Planning together and cultivating shared leadership
- Celebrating and highlighting work
- Engaging children, youth and young adults

YESS Member Coordination and Action: Focus Areas

- Early Childhood Education and School Readiness (0-5)
- Ravenswood City School District Community & School Partnerships (3-14)
- College Readiness, Access and Completion (14-24)
 - » High School Graduation
 - » College Readiness and Completion
- Job and Career Readiness and Placement (14-24)

Measuring Progress

(Members / The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and their Communities and Steering Committee)

- Setting and tracking clear shared metrics
- Working with members to develop and answer research questions through data analysis—and to take action

Capacity Building

(OEPA/Steering Committee/Partners)

- Fundraising and resource development
- Sharing (and providing technical assistance to support) effective practices, relevant research and models in areas of data collection and use, organizational development, parent and family engagement and youth development program quality
- Continuing to recruit relevant partners that will contribute to the overall impact of our work serving children, youth, young adults, families and communities



photo courtesy of Ravenswood City School District

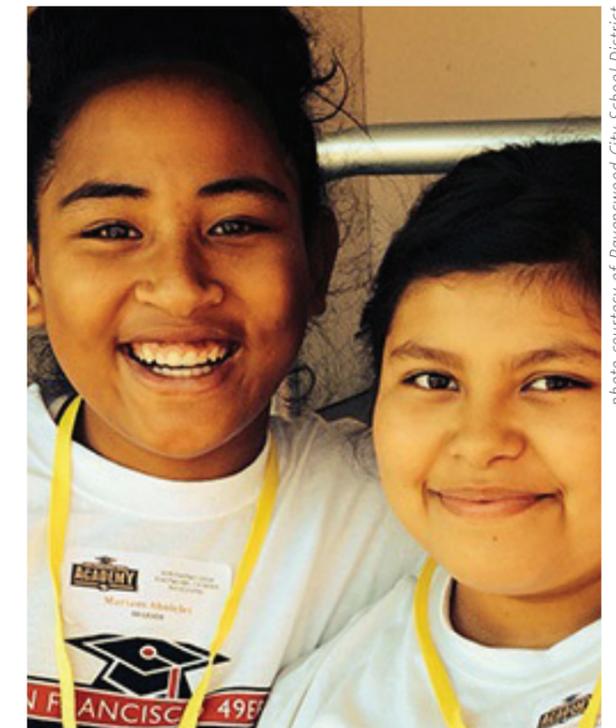


photo courtesy of Ravenswood City School District

YESS THEORY OF CHANGE

MISSION

YESS is a network of organizations and institutions dedicated to ensuring that East Palo Alto and Belle Haven/eastern Menlo Park children, youth and young adults, ages 0–24, are able to achieve their full potential through education, employment and a healthy community.

VISION

A thriving community where all children, youth, young adults, families and residents are engaged, connected, healthy and economically self-sufficient.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES: BY 2035

- All East Palo Alto and Belle Haven/eastern Menlo Park children, youth, and young adults:
1. Graduate from high school, ready for college and/or career
 2. Experience healthy, safe, supportive pathways to adulthood

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES: BY 2025

SYSTEMS LEVEL:

- Sustainable infrastructure and model
- Resources aligned
- Districts and CBOs link data to continue to improve programs and services

ORGANIZATION LEVEL:

- YESS organizations provide increasingly high quality programming and education
- Organizations effectively refer/link children, youth, young adults and families to targeted/appropriate resources and opportunities including health and mental health
- Organizations collect and use data consistently to improve practice

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL: (Sample indicator areas—specifics to be set by action teams)

- Increased school attendance rates
- Increased graduation rates
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- Increased youth engagement
- Increased number and diversity of job and career placements
- Increased access to and use of health services including mental health

COLLECTIVE IMPACT STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

Collaboration & Shared Leadership (OEPA/Steering Committee)

- Implementing Collective Impact model
- Communicating clearly and consistently
- Planning together and cultivating shared leadership
- Celebrating and highlighting work
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YESS Member Coordination and Action: Focus Areas

- Early Childhood Education and School Readiness (0-5)
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- Job and Career Readiness and Placement (14-24)
- College Readiness, Access and Completion (14-24)
 - ▶ High School Graduation
 - ▶ College Readiness And Completion

Measuring Progress (Members / The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and their Communities and Steering Committee)

- Setting and tracking clear shared metrics
- Working with members to develop and answer research questions through data analysis—and to take action

Capacity Building (OEPA/Steering Committee/Partners)

- Fundraising and resource development
- Sharing (and providing technical assistance to support) effective practices, relevant research and models in areas of data collection and use, organizational development, parent and family engagement and youth development program quality
- Continuing to recruit relevant partners that will contribute to the overall impact of our work serving children, youth, young adults, families and communities

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES: BY 2018

SYSTEMS LEVEL:

- Stable and engaged network of partnerships with organizations serving children, youth, young adults and families
- Increased resources for infrastructure and cross-agency work to reach shared goals
- Increased coordination among community-based organizations (CBO), districts, city and county
- Clear baseline data identified, along with ways to measure and report progress
- Increased use of data to inform planning and drive improvement across agencies

ORGANIZATION LEVEL:

- Members increase capacity to provide children and their families with diverse and comprehensive programs, services and supports in coordinated and efficient way
- Member cross-agency teams set goals and indicators, and implement strategies to “move the needle”
- Members improve data collection and use of data

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL:

- Increased knowledge of and improved access to high quality programs and opportunities
- Decrease in barriers to learning and employment
- Increased participation (attendance) in school and program settings among all children, youth and young adults—including re-entry, out of school, etc.

RESOURCES

Implemented Collective Impact model to facilitate goal achievement; community-based organizations with deep connections to youth and families; district leaders; funder advocates; staff; infrastructure; data capacity; diversity of organizations; residents and leaders; young people

Addendum A Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS) 2013-2015 Steering Committee Members

Name of Member Organization	Primary Member Organization Representative (Name & Title)	Alternate Member Organization Representative(s)
East Palo Alto Library/ San Mateo County Library	Dolly Goyal Branch Manager	
East Palo Alto Police Department	Albert Pardini Chief	Jaime Zarate
Nuestra Casa	Andrés Connell Executive Director	
One East Palo Alto	Faye McNair-Knox, Ph.D. Executive Director & YESS Convener	Honorable Sharifa Wilson
Ravenswood City School District	Gloria Hernandez-Goff, Ed.D. Superintendent	Angelica Tellechea
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, 4th District	Honorable Warren Slocum Supervisor	Maya Perkins, J.D.
Sequoia Union High School District	James Lianides, Ed.D. Superintendent	Carmina Chavez
The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities	Amy Gerstein, Ph.D. Executive Director	Mary Hofstedt, Ed.M. Jamila Henderson
Youth Community Service	Leif Erickson Executive Director	

2014-2015 YESS Direct Services Group Members

Member Organization	
Acknowledge Alliance*	Girls to Women
Adolescent Counseling Services*	Health Connected (formerly Teen Talk)
Aim High	JobTrain*
All Five	Linking Immigrants to Benefits, Resources & Education
Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula*	Live In Peace
Building Futures Now	Making It Happen for Our Children
Children's Health Council	Mid-Peninsula Athletic Association
Collective Roots	MOUSE Squad Student Tech Leadership
College Track	Mural, Music & Arts Project
Creative Montessori Learning Center	Nuestra Casa
East Palo Alto Academy	Office of San Mateo County Supervisor Warren Slocum, 4th District*
East Palo Alto Library/San Mateo County Library	One East Palo Alto Neighborhood Improvement Initiative
East Palo Alto Police Department	Ravenswood City School District
East Palo Alto Tee-Ball/Pitching Machine	Sequoia Big Picture School*
East Palo Alto Youth Court	Sequoia Union High School District*
Ecumenical Hunger Program	StarVista*
Education Partnerships Haas Center for Public Service (Stanford University)*	The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities (Stanford University)*
Environmental Volunteers	Teen Success, Inc.*
Family Connections	Youth Community Service*
Foundation for a College Education	Youth United for Community Action

YESS Direct Services Group Associate Members

Member Organization
Bayshore Christian Ministries
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto
Project Access Family Resource Center at Light Tree Apartments
YMCA of Silicon Valley, Lewis and Joan Platt East Palo Alto Family YMCA

NOTE: YESS is a collaborative convened by One East Palo Alto Neighborhood Improvement Initiative
*Organization that serves East Palo Alto (EPA) youth/young adults but is headquartered elsewhere or may not have an EPA site or has multiple sites, including EPA.

Addendum B

Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS)

2015 Advisory Group (formerly YESS Policy Group)

Member Name	Organizational Affiliation
East Palo Alto City Government	
Hon. Larry Moody	East Palo Alto City Council
Chief Albert Pardini	East Palo Alto Police Department
Hon. Donna Rutherford	East Palo Alto City Council
Faith Groups	
Rev. Mary Frazier	Fellowship of Faith
Local Nonprofits and Other Entities	
Dolly Goyal	East Palo Alto Library/San Mateo County Library
Andrés Connell	Nuestra Casa
Faye C. McNair-Knox, Ph.D.	One East Palo Alto
Amy Gerstein, Ph.D.	The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities
Leif Erickson	Youth Community Service
Parents	
Roscoe Jennings	Ravenswood Parent Teacher Associations
Patsy Character	Nuestra Casa Promotoras
Elizabeth de la Herran	Nuestra Casa Promotoras
Kassundra Dunn	Nuestra Casa Promotoras
Mariane Latu	Nuestra Casa Promotoras
Kathy Rios	Nuestra Casa Promotoras
Vacant	Ravenswood School Site Councils

Addendum B: YESS Advisory Group (cont'd.)

Member Name	Organizational Affiliation
San Mateo County	
Assistant Sheriff Tom Gallagher	San Mateo County Sheriff's Office
Steve Kaplan, LCSW	San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services
Chief John Keene	San Mateo County Probation Department
Shireen Malekafzali	San Mateo County Health System
Sheriff Greg Munks	San Mateo County Sheriff's Office
Iliana Rodriguez	San Mateo County Human Services Agency
Bryan Rogers	PeninsulaWorks Jobs for Youth
Hon. Warren Slocum	San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Selina Toy-Lee	San Mateo County Human Services Agency
School Districts	
Gloria Hernandez-Goff, Ed.D.	Ravenswood City School District
James Lianides, Ed.D.	Sequoia Union High School District
Youth	
James Childs	Transition Age Youth
Mele Latu	Transition Age Youth
Vacant	In-School Youth
Vacant	Out of School Youth

Addendum C

Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS)

2014 Focus Group Feedback Matrix

Strategic planning consulting team, Shiree Teng and Miguel Gavaldon, conducted seven focus groups with 24 young people and 40 adults in August and September, 2014 to ensure community participation and voice in YESS' strategic planning process. There were four focus groups with 24 young people, and three focus groups with 40 East Palo Alto residents and parents (18 African American residents/parents; 11 Latino/a residents/parents; 11 Pacific Islander residents/parents). Below is a summary of highlights expressed by focus group participants:

	COMMON THEMES ACROSS FOCUS GROUPS	EAST PALO ALTO YOUNG PEOPLE	PACIFIC ISLANDER PARENTS	LATINO/A PARENTS	AFRICAN AMERICAN PARENTS
COMMUNITY ASSETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sense of community Diversity Strong legacy of protest and standing up for justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community, block parties, festivals where people come together and have fun in walkable spaces Diversity We protest and demand equal rights Strong youth serving nonprofit organizations Friendly police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community, small walkable town Diversity Ease in navigating city bureaucracy Strong history of protest and standing up Schools are decent to children, compared to other places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong youth serving programs and summer programs Efforts to improve education, charter schools. Integrated, Anglos do not reject Latinos Small town located between large cities Community resources, access to corporate resources, Silicon Valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small town community, close relationships Diversity Climate and location Fighting spirit and legacy
COMMUNITY NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs Affordable housing Improved education and outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End violence Jobs More teen centered spaces for safe recreation More educational support More support for those exiting the juvenile justice system Less <i>adultism</i>, more respect for young people Safer sidewalks Affordable rents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create affordable housing Improve education and outcomes for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop affordable housing Improve education and outcomes for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring about renewed, refreshed sense of community and inclusive citizen engagement, especially given demographic changes in EPA. Develop clear understanding of needs of African American families and children as distinct from other families and children

	COMMON THEMES cont'd.	EAST PALO ALTO YOUNG PEOPLE	PACIFIC ISLANDER PARENTS	LATINO/A PARENTS	AFRICAN AMERICAN PARENTS
NONPROFIT PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate services among nonprofits so they work in concert Raise profile of nonprofit services among community members to increase access Offer more creative, youth centered programming for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer more and better job opportunities for young people Conduct more outreach (e.g., disseminate centralized directory of nonprofits) and outreach using social media so that nonprofit services are more accessible and more well known Feature younger staff, more youth centered/initiated activities Work toward less <i>adultism</i> and more respect for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate services among nonprofits, work in concert and demolish silos Reduce barriers to access Be strategic in order to provide support/services to undocumented folks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become well known by the community Increase youth involvement Provide parent education Develop low income/affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more creative, youth-centered programming for young people Develop better understanding of the needs of African American families and children as distinct from other families and children
PUBLIC AGENCY PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve infrastructure to increase security for children, especially sidewalks, lighting, and parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve infrastructure, especially sidewalks and lighting Implement more community festivals and events, e.g., Juneteenth Reduce violence and incarceration More streamlined social services (e.g., public assistance/food stamps) Work toward less <i>adultism</i> and more respect for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain/improve city infrastructure: parks sidewalks, streets, sewers Assess and address what is going on with the police department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve infrastructure to increase security for children, e.g., in the parks Offer programs serving and empowering youth Require police to have a positive relationship with youth, not one that is based on fear Offer low income /affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overhaul circulation plan to minimize/manage through traffic Provide more resources for schools Enforce existing codes to improve health and safety in the neighborhoods
SCHOOL DISTRICT PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more supported pathways to college for all young people Improve curriculum to be more supportive and reflective of the cultures represented in student body, the opposite of assimilation and integration. Increase resources for schools, reduce uneven distribution of resources across schools Take into account the needs of all types of families when thinking about parent involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer more supported pathways to college for all young people Work toward less <i>adultism</i> and more respect for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be more supportive and reflective of the cultures represented in student body, the opposite of assimilation and integration. More child-focused rather than placing implementation of curriculum over well-being of the child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve schools and outcomes for Latino/a students Work to involve Latino/a parents in school and district meetings; take into account work schedules Improve resources for schools, reduce uneven distribution of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More supportive and reflective of the cultures represented in student body, the opposite of assimilation and integration Strive to understand the needs of African American families and children as distinct from other families and children, especially given demographic changes in EPA Improve school outcomes, increase resources for schools

Addendum D

YESS Focus Groups with Youth Summary Report

Four sessions held on 8/18/14 and 8/19/14

Facilitated by Shiree Teng

Participants:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) 16, 9th grade, Menlo-Atherton High School | (13) 20, not in school |
| (2) 17, Frosh, Cañada College | (14) 20, not in school |
| (3) 15, 10th grade, East Palo Alto Academy | (15) 17, 12th grade, East Palo Alto Academy |
| (4) 18, 12th grade, Eastside College Preparatory School | (16) 20, not in school |
| (5) 15, 10th grade, Menlo-Atherton High School | (17) 17, Junior, East Palo Alto Academy |
| (6) 19, Sophomore, St Edward's University, Austin, TX | (18) 17, 12th grade, East Palo Alto Academy |
| (7) 16, 12th grade, East Palo Alto Academy | (19) 17, 12th grade, East Palo Alto Academy |
| (8) 20, not in school | (20) 17, 11th grade, East Palo Alto Academy |
| (9) 15, 10th grade, East Palo Alto Academy | (21) 20, not in school |
| (10) 21, not in school | (22) 20, sophomore, trying to get back into college |
| (11) 17, Frosh, Cañada College | (23) 16, 11th grade, Woodside High School |
| (12) 20, not in school | (24) 16, Carlmont High School |

Ethnicity	Females	Males
African Americans	7	2
Latino/as	1	5
Pacific Islanders	4	5
	12	12

Vision for East Palo Alto

- **Stop the violence, stop the shootings; no gangs**
 - » More jobs for teens and young adults year-round; beyond summer jobs.
 - » Police to patrol more, talk to us more and not just react when bad things happen; treat us the way they'd want to be treated.
 - » More cops to control the gangs. Talk to people. Stop the drug selling. More police who actually enforce the rules with consequences.

Vision for East Palo Alto (cont'd.)

- **Less socioeconomic gap and more jobs** so there's no need to join a gang. Help small family businesses. More shopping centers and more jobs.
- **A place for teens** to be engaged where it's got fun (as defined by teens, not adults) activities to drop-in and get help with whatever we need, and staffed by people who have youthful energy.
- **Educational help** for youth and adults to help us get into college, more options for us after high school, and more outreach to let us know what's available.
 - » We want to see more young people go to college, get degrees and educated; for adults too.
 - » Programs to help rehabilitate those who are on probation or parole.
- **Sidewalks**; make it safer for us to walk on the streets.
- **Affordable rents**; more Google-like folks have been moving in, places getting fixed up, rents going up, forcing parents to have to work more to afford living here.
- **Don't judge us** based on how we look or who we're hanging out with; talk to us, ask us questions, include us, hear us out and not just on things adults want to know; be our mentors, engage us more. Don't treat us like little kids. Be more curious about what we think and want. Understand our opinions whether you agree with us or not.

What we like about our community

- Block parties, festivals where people come together and have fun;
- Diverse community where I can learn about other people and their cultures and eat their foods;
- Protests where we demand equal rights;
- Weather;
- Small city so we can walk everywhere and know a lot of people;
- Mural, Music and Arts Project where we learn about history and engage in art;
- SEP treats us with positivity and respect and gives us jobs and mentors;
- College Track – good program but limited capacity;
- JobTrain is a good program. Wish there were more non-menial and non-fast food jobs.

Our wish list...

- Jobs + Activities = No Time for Bad Activities
- More block parties and community festivals, like Juneteenth, Cesar Chavez, Peace March and other community events where the vibe is positive, and where neighbors pull together.

Our wish list... (cont'd.)

"We want the nonprofit group adults to know that we think they're doing a good job. Keep it going! I haven't seen them turn people away or anyone down. Kids from College Track go to college. MMAP is awesome. SEP gets us jobs. Their jobs are hard but they don't give up, and they're always trying. That's motivation for me!"

"Stop trying too hard. They think they're doing very interesting things when it's not... Don't throw pity money at us. Sit with us. Ask us what's interesting. Have people work in the programs who have first hand experience in East Palo Alto. There's no need for incentives if the program is actually interesting."

- A directory of groups and/or organizations that are working within EPA so we know where programs and resources are. The people who know tell people they know... so if you're not "in the know," you don't know what's going on. Outreach seems to be with the same circles of people.

"I don't participate because I don't know the organizations or the programs..."

"Use social media to reach young people, like Facebook, Instagram, posters, twitter so the word can get out through networks and the streets."

- Stop the shootings

"I'm in the streets a lot and don't want to get shot."

"I see too many teens either going to the coffin or to jail."

"The police needs to be more strict, and to step up their game."

- Keep the diversity of the community

"There's big diversity here and people get along with the majority, that's Latinos and Blacks. APIs are coming up as the minority but people are all the same once you get to know them..."

- Clean up the City more and keep the lights on in the parks to 10PM

"I want more sidewalks... cleaner streets, less spray painted tags on buildings."

"We want the lights at the parks to stay on til 9 or 10 PM. Some homes aren't homes and we don't want to be around there and rather hang out with our friends at the park."

- More direct pathways to college

"I'd like more help from adults to get to college...and I want the adults to ask me about how they can help."

"Everybody has goals to further their education and to get out from tough situations. It's important that we have MMAP, YUCA and places to go to express ourselves."

Our wish list... (cont'd.)

- Cut the wait time at the welfare office and more food for the homeless

"The Ecumenical Hunger Program is good. There are a lot of people who are homeless and we need to find ways to help them more. More churches could open their doors to them."

- Cut the victim attitude

"Stop the 'I can't do it, what's the point' attitude that's like a victim."

"If people get more involved, it may take a while... to come back, give back in a nonprofit organization. If not, then things will stay the same and there will be no change in East Palo Alto for a long time."



photo courtesy of East Palo Alto Library/San Mateo County Library

Addendum E

Summary of YESS Interview Findings

October 2014

Shiree Teng conducted one-on-one interviews in September of 2014 as part of YESS' strategic planning efforts. The interviewees were Hon. Larry Moody, Iliana Rodriguez, John Keene, José Santos and Hon. Rich Gordon.

Overall, interviews reflected that YESS is viewed as a valuable collaborative effort, which has the potential to operate and contribute more effectively than it does currently.

Value added

Interviewers identified the collaborative as a **focal point** in the community that commands strength in numbers, in uniting small nonprofits under one umbrella. YESS is lauded for being **diverse and truly representative** of the East Palo Alto community, in that all of the major players are leaders in the East Palo Alto community.

One interviewee noted that YESS summits are powerful for the ways they connect community leaders and workers with other stakeholders, government institutions and politicians. Another noted that YESS meetings represent a good opportunity to network with other groups in the area and to keep abreast of what trends organizations are facing in the field of education and youth and how they are addressing these. Featuring the *superintendent of schools* with the group was a named as a highlight.

“They can be a powerhouse in making decisions and helping City Council make more informed decisions. Thirty-five nonprofits and Superintendents at the table and on the same page. They can make stuff happen!”

Strengthening YESS' Work

While interviewees saw the value of data sharing and coordination of service among YESS participant organizations, they wanted to see more forward looking targeted action from YESS.

What is YESS' Focused Impact?

Overall there was agreement among those interviewed that the YESS collaborative should move decisively towards making impact in its stated focus areas. Those interviewed called out specific areas that would improve the lives of East Palo Alto's youth; improving the sidewalks that line the streets, education, safety for youth, parent participation, and meaningful jobs were raised as potential areas of focus.

Two interviewees expressed some impatience with the collaborative, and may jeopardize its relationships with foundations without producing clearer outcomes in concrete projects.

“Optimally, they have to challenge themselves to address some systemic issues that affect youth in the community. We need to see some concrete results.”

Summary of YESS Interview Findings (cont'd.)

Leverage Collaborative Partnership towards Goals

Interviews indicated a need for YESS to harness the partnerships it has created and holds as part of its collaborative towards a specific end, to strategically utilize its network **beyond information sharing**. One participating organization expressed confusion as to why the resources and expertise of participating organizations are not leveraged towards a clear goal,

“Where is the ask of us?”

Part of this means clarifying a mechanism for collaborative participants to take action, come to resolution or address identified issues.

“[We] can't constantly look at data from schools related to our community and allow those school districts to sit at the YESS table and not empower the groups to address those issues.”

“Come with clear articulated goals, understand what [collaborative] partners can and can't do, and meet them halfway.”

Meeting Facilitation and Coordination

Concerns from interviews ranged from administrative details to more **substantive issues** of facilitation. One interviewee suggested more advance notice prior to each meeting as high level leaders are invited whose calendars are filled up way in advance. Another interviewee recommended that there be indigenous

representation in the collaboration and that meetings be held in the evenings rather than daytime so that community advocates could participate. Another interviewee suggested that meeting once every other month for three hours would not be enough to support a more productive collaboration.

It was also recommended that meeting facilitation needs attention, especially **streamlining the agenda and the time spent**, not spending so much time on check ins with each organization. Also noted was that discussions should be **forward looking and not so focused on what hasn't worked** in the past:

“Do less focusing on past practices of the city, relationships with county, and look to the future.”

Marketing or Brand

Two interviews noted that YESS could stand to improve its “brand” or marketing, raising its profile among the communities it serves, especially to engage parents, because it is not well known now.

One interviewee suggested that the YESS “brand” be along the lines of **“a collaboration of nonprofits and public agencies with a focus on youth development; the whole youth from cradle to career.”**

Leadership

Two interviews noted that the **leadership of YESS could be shared** among stakeholders, now that the collaboration is successfully launched.



Top left photo courtesy of Girls to Women; top right and center left photos courtesy of Mural, Music and Arts Project; center right photo courtesy of East Palo Alto Library/San Mateo County Library; bottom photo courtesy of Ravenswood City School District.



photo courtesy of Mural, Music and Arts Project

**An investment today in East Palo Alto
and Belle Haven/eastern Menlo Park
children, youth and young adults will
ensure a better tomorrow.**



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