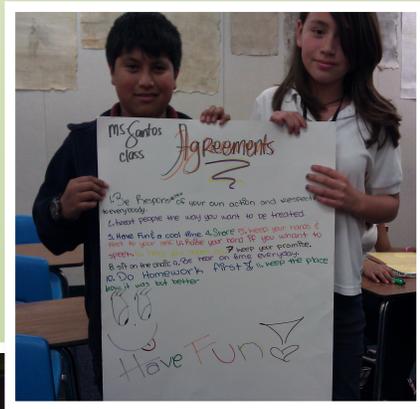


# HQSES STUDY FINAL REPORT

**High Quality Supplemental Educational Services and  
Afterschool Partnerships Demonstration Project**  
*An Evaluation of THINK Together Programs in Santa Ana Unified School District*

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## INTRODUCTION

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This report is the final report of a three-year evaluation study of the High Quality Supplemental Educational Services (HQSES) and Afterschool Partnerships Demonstration Project of the Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) in partnership with THINK Together and focuses on Year Three evaluation findings. The demonstration project intends to serve as a national model for how best to coordinate comprehensive afterschool programming with targeted tutoring and academic intervention services. THINK Together—a non-profit organization dedicated to the provision of a range of out-of-school learning opportunities to students at nearly 400 public schools throughout Southern California—is the primary service provider for the SAUSD’s federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Community Learning Center (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) and state After School Safety and Education Program (ASES) and is an approved provider of SES tutoring for the district’s K-12 students.

The University of California Irvine, the project’s contracted external evaluator, carried out the three-year HQSES Study from Fall 2008 to Spring 2011. This report is for the third and final year of the study and presents findings for both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study for the 2010-2011 academic year.

### PURPOSE OF STUDY AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The purpose of the study is to identify best practices in THINK Together’s third year of implementing its *Aligned Delivery* approach to provide Supplemental Educational Services and quality afterschool program services at K-12 schools in the Santa Ana Unified School District during the 2010-2011 academic year. This report documents progress made by THINK Together in achieving the following four performance indicators of the HQSES project in its third year of implementation:

1. The number of students who enroll in THINK Together SES.
2. The number of eligible students who complete full programs of THINK Together SES.
3. The percentage of enrolled students, especially the lowest-achieving students, who improve their academic performance on the CSTs in Language Arts or Math.
4. The number of positive, supportive relationships that students report having with adults and peers.

The Year Three study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods with measures for each of the four HQSES performance indicators, including: student program enrollment, attendance, and completion data; standardized test scores; parent post surveys; student pre and post surveys; observations of SES tutoring sessions and afterschool program activities; observations of staff development activities; focus group interviews with tutors and parents; interviews with Site Coordinators and program administrators; and examination of program curriculum, tutor support and staff development materials.

Related to performance indicators #1 and #2, SES attendance records were used to measure the effectiveness of recruitment and retention of students in the SES program:

(1) the number of students enrolled in THINK Together SES; (2) the number of students completing all 22 sessions of the THINK Together SES program offered during the 2010/2011 program. Staff and parent interviews provided data on program practices that supported parental selection of THINK as their SES provider, regular attendance of enrolled students, and program completion.

As a measure of performance indicator # 3, the study examined the percentage of enrolled students, especially the lowest-achieving students who improved their academic performance on the CSTs in Language Arts or Math. In addition, measures of students' sense of efficacy in Language Arts and in Math were collected via student and parent surveys. Interviews and program observations also provided data relevant to the strategies for identifying and meeting student academic needs.

Performance indicator #4 was measured through surveys of students and parents as well as observations focusing on the quality of adults' relationships with students during SES tutoring sessions and ASP program activities.

Observations of staff development activities and interviews with staff and the SES Program Director provided further data on training and on THINK staff practices that focused on supporting students' opportunities for building positive relationships with adults and other students. In addition, observations of the range of SES and ASP program activities provided evidence of positive relationship building and other core indicators of program quality and student experiences. Surveys and interviews with parents provided data on their perceptions of the quality of their child's interactions with his/her SES tutor and general perceptions of the quality of tutoring and afterschool program services provided. Principal surveys provided additional feedback from another key stakeholder in the school community.

In summary, the HQSES Year Three Study Report identifies key replicable and scalable strategies related to providing (1) an effective management structure as it relates to the programmatic and staffing logistics of delivering both SES and 21stCCLC/ASES afterschool program; (2) effective student recruitment and retention strategies; (3) effective strategies for identifying and meeting student academic needs; and (4) effective strategies for promoting positive relationships that students have with adults and peers. It also identifies barriers to achieving the goals of the THINK *aligned delivery* model.

### **EVALUATION STUDY DESIGN—YEAR THREE**

As in Year One and Two of the HQSES study, in Year Three the focus remained on the above outlined performance indicators and student outcomes, with particular attention to identifying effective program management and service delivery practices resulting from the first two years of program development and implementation experience. While the quantitative component of this study focused on documenting student outcomes the qualitative component aimed to discern the programmatic conditions for achieving these outcomes and to identify scalable and replicable strategies that can ensure program success as well as any new or persistent challenges in meeting the performance indicator benchmarks.

THINK Together provides After-School Program (ASP) services at 36 elementary, 9 intermediate schools, and 2 high schools in the Santa Ana Unified School District. In the fall 2010 students at 34 SAUSD sites (21 Elementary; 8 Intermediate; 5 High School) were assigned to THINK SES services, however, students initially enrolled in THINK SES at three elementary and one high school either did not show, had a conflict with the tutoring schedule, or moved to another district. Three students were reassigned to another provider due to their elementary school site not allowing THINK to use its facilities for the SES tutoring to take place [according to information provided by SES program administration]. As a result, THINK actually provided services at the 30 SAUSD schools listed in Table 1. [See Table 11, Enrollment by School in Section II for details of number of students served at each site including enrollment and attrition].

Table 1. THINK Together SES Sites in SAUSD, 2010-2011

Elementary Schools (n = 18)		Intermediate Schools (n = 8)	High Schools (n = 4)
Adams	Jefferson	Carr	Century
Carver	Kennedy	Lathrop	Saddleback*
Davis	Lincoln	McFadden	Santa Ana*
Diamond	Lowell*	Mendez Fundamental	Valley
Edison	Monte Vista	Sierra	
Franklin	Romero-Cruz	Spurgeon	
Garfield	Sepulveda	Villa Fundamental	
Hoover	Walker	Willard	
Jackson	Wilson		

\*Only THINK SES provided, no THINK ASP program at these sites.

Table 2 summarizes the district’s overall SES enrollment for Year One (2008-2009) and Year Two (2009-2010) and Year Three (2010-2011) of the HQSES study. It shows that although the number of eligible students meeting the priority criteria for receiving SES services increased by 629 students from Year One (14,325) to Year Two (14,954), this number fell in Year Three to 14,075 (a decrease of 979 students from the prior year)—the number of eligible students across the district overall fell by 9,174 from Year One (40,391) to Year Three (31,217). Accordingly, the number of schools in the District in Program Improvement (PI) status—and hence school sites eligible to receive SES services—decreased from 39 in 2009-10 to 33 PI schools in 2010-11. This impacted the number of students assigned to THINK Together in Year Three of the HQSES project reducing the THINK SES enrollment numbers by 45% over the three years of the project. As such, the District assigned THINK Together as the SES service provider for 191 of the eligible students in 2010-11 (compared to 424 in 2008-09, and 240 in 2009-10) of which 146 attended the THINK Together SES Program in 2011.

It is important to note that as schools’ standardized test scores improve and the schools are no longer eligible for this program, students at those schools who are still performing far below or

below basic no longer have access to SES services. Hence, even though fewer schools were eligible in 2010-11, the District received 793 more applications for SES services than the previous year. Also, while the District received applications from 6,373 students, 1,187 of applicants did not meet the SES program’s eligibility requirements. Of the 5,186 eligible applicants nearly half (2,517) were served and the 2,662 remaining eligible students were placed on waitlist.

Table 2: SAUSD Supplemental Educational Enrollment Services (2008-2011)\*

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Number of eligible students	40,391	38,109	31,217
Number of eligible students meeting priority criteria (FBB/BB in CST Reading/Language Arts or Math)	14,325	14,954	14,075
Number of schools in Program Improvement	37	39	33*
Total number of applications received	5,061	5,580	6,373
Number of students on waitlist	1,909	1,928	2,662
Total number of students served	2,706	2,850	2,517
Number of students enrolled in THINK Together	425	240	191

\*Data from SAUSD SES comparison data chart retrieved from District website Parent Resource page: <http://www.sausd.us/Page/14842>. There were 33 sites listed as eligible in the SAUSD Parent Brochure.

Quantitative data (enrollment, attendance, student pre-post surveys, parent program exit surveys, and standardized test scores) were collected from the 30 school sites where THINK Together provided SES services in 2010-11.

Qualitative data (ASP and SES activity observations, staff, parent and principal interviews) were collected from a sample of 14 THINK Together SES study sample sites (see Table 3 below). Table 3 lists all the schools selected as HQSES study sites where qualitative data were collected [staff and parent interviews, program observations and principal interviews and surveys] across the three-year evaluation study. A total of 17 elementary sites participated at one point during the three years of the study, with 8 sites participating in 2010-11. A total of 4 intermediate sites and two high school sites participated in Year Three of the HQSES qualitative study. Seven sites—4 elementary (Davis, Edison, Hoover, Lowell) and 3 intermediate (Carr, McFadden and Spurgeon)—participated during all three years of the study.

The criterion for selecting study sites was based primarily on those with the highest number of SES students enrolled. One site, Lowell Elementary, was included as a site where THINK was not the ASP provider. Martin Elementary and Diamond Elementary were selected in 2009 and 2010 respectively as Teacher-Lead sites [a credentialed teacher at the school site was charged

with managing the ASP using THINK Together Staff to deliver services, however, this model was phased out in 2011].

Table 3: Overview of Study Sites: Year One, Two and Three

Study Sites	Year I 2009	Year II 2010	Year III 2011
<b>Elementary</b>			
Adams	2009		
Davis	2009	2010	2011
Diamond		2010	
Edison	2009	2010	2011
Esqueda*		2010	
Garfield		2010	2011
Heninger	2009		
Hoover	2009	2010	2011
Lincoln			2011
Lowell*	2009	2010	2011
Martin	2009	2010	
Remington	2009	2010	
Romero-Cruz		2010	
Roosevelt		2010	
Walker			2011
Washington	2009		
Wilson		2010	2011
<b>Intermediate</b>			
Carr	2009	2010	2011
Lathrop		2010	2011
McFadden	2009	2010	2011
Spurgeon	2009	2010	2011
<b>High Schools</b>			
Valley		2010	2011
Century			2011
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>

\*SES program only; no THINK ASP at site.

Research questions that guided the HQSES evaluation study and the measures and methodologies used are detailed below.

## *Measures and Methodology*

### **Qualitative Component**

#### *Research Questions*

The qualitative component of the Year Three evaluation study focused on identifying key replicable and scalable strategies related to the HQSES demonstration project goals as follows:

1. What recruitment practices are carried out in Year Three and how do they affect enrollment, and are there any barriers identified by stakeholders (THINK staff and administrators and THINK parents, and students)?
2. What practices promote retention in THINK SES and what challenges and barriers exist for students to enroll and complete their SES session?
3. What are the key components and goals of the THINK *aligned delivery* approach and how is it being implemented in Year Three?
4. What program practices serve to promote positive relationships that students have with adults and peers in the THINK SES and Afterschool programs?
5. How are SES tutors and site staff supported (through professional development, coaching and program management practices) to effectively implement the *aligned delivery* approach?
6. In what ways are THINK Together's SES and ASP programs designed to coordinate curriculum and instructional strategies to achieve objectives of the *aligned delivery* approach?
7. How do stakeholders (parents and school administrators) perceive the quality of the SES and ASP program services and what benefits do they perceive for students receiving both THINK SES and ASP services?

#### *Qualitative Data Collected*

##### *Observations*

Observations of both SES tutoring sessions and ASP activities [with a focus on academic enrichment activities] were carried out at 14 study sample sites (8 Elementary; 4 Intermediate Schools, 2 High Schools) between February 1 and May 30, 2011. A total of 85 observations of program activities were completed: 27 THINK SES sessions and 58 THINK afterschool program activities were observed and rated using the Promising Practice Rating System (PPRS) [See Appendix A, Study Measures, for a sample PPRS observation measure] to assess quality of program practices linked to student social and academic outcomes and related to all four Performance Indicators of the HQSES demonstration project.

Table 4. Year Three SES and ASP Activity Observations

# Rated ASP Activity and SES Session Observations (15-30 minutes each)			
	Afterschool Program Activities	SES Tutoring Sessions	TOTALS
Elementary	32	15	47
Middle School	20	7	27
High School	6	5	11
<b>Total # observations</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>85</b>

UC Irvine Project Scientist, Pilar O’Cadiz, carried out all SES program observations. Dr. O’Cadiz trained and supervised three UC Irvine student research assistants who assisted in carrying out observations of the ASP activities. In the Year Three study, the ASP observations focused on academic enrichment activities, although other types of enrichment and recreation activities such as sports, youth leadership, and special interest clubs (e.g. fashion, newsletter, skateboarding, guitar, DJ) were observed to capture the range of THINK Afterschool Program activities.

In addition to the program observations, observations of SES staff development activities were carried out, including: an observation of the SES tutor orientation (January 5, 2011) and three observations of Friday Planning sessions at the beginning, middle and end of the 2011 SES program period (February, March and April).

#### *Interviews and Surveys*

Interviews of **Site Coordinators** (SCs) at 10 of the 14 study sites were carried out between March 1 and May 31, 2011. SC interviews were conducted individually at the school site and lasted from 30 minutes to an hour. Questions prompted SCs to identify promising practices related to HQSES target areas and to identify any new or persistent challenges they face in implementing an *aligned delivery* approach.

Focus group interviews with 15 of the total of 19 **SES Tutors** working in the 2011 program were conducted in groups of 2 to 3 at the end of the SES Program in April, 2011. Tutors were asked to share their perceptions of the quality of professional development and support they received from SES program experiences and to reflect their tutoring experience and their perceptions of the effectiveness of SES curriculum and instructional strategies they implemented.

Five **Parents** whose students attended the 2011 SES program were interviewed regarding (a) their prior knowledge and experience with SES services, (b) reasons for choosing THINK as SES provider, (c) the quality of academic support provided to their child in SES tutoring session, (d) their child's opportunities for developing positive relationships with adults and peers in their SES sessions and in the THINK afterschool program, (e) the quality of ASP services and academic enrichment activities, and (f) the benefits of participation in comprehensive set of services (SES and ASP) and their suggestions for program improvement. Qualitative written answers provided by parents on surveys were translated from Spanish to English and summarized.

**Principals** at the 14 study sample sites were emailed a brief survey about the SES program in June 2011, 7 responses were received. The purpose of the principal survey [see Appendix A: Study Measures] was to gather data on principals' perceptions of (a) the quality of academic support provided to students in SES tutoring sessions, (b) the quality of ASP services and academic enrichment activities and alignment with school day, (c) the benefits of participation in a comprehensive set of services (i.e. SES and ASP) and (d) suggestions for program improvement.

Ongoing informal interviewing of the **SES Program Manager**, Elizabeth Morales, was conducted throughout the 2010-11 program year with a formal interview at the end of the program in April 2011. Her insights into the program's initial challenges and her team's ongoing efforts to develop a quality SES program provide a foundation for understanding the data collected. The SES Program Manager provided key information regarding (a) the development of an effective SES tutor training and support system, (b) the development of curriculum resources for tutors to access, (d) outreach strategies to parents, principals and the school community, and (e) efforts at coordinating with ASP program.

### *Artifacts*

Documents pertaining to THINK Together's SES and afterschool programs were collected to provide further data regarding the program's management and curriculum design, including:

- Sample SES student assessment instruments
- SES Lesson Plans and Curriculum materials
- SES Tutor Professional development materials
- Sample SES communications to Parents
- Sample SES communications to Principals
- SES parent information materials (developed by SAUSD and THINK Together)
- ASP Site Weekly Schedules
- ASP curriculum, activity lesson plans, and materials
- Various documents related to THINK SES program development

## **Quantitative Component**

Three types of data, provided by THINK Together, were used for the quantitative evaluation: (1) student demographics and test scores from the Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) database; (2) attendance and assessment records from the THINK Together database; and (3) surveys of students and parents. Analyses of these data, conducted by UC Irvine independent evaluators, provide evaluation of the THINK Together SES 10-11 program as well as data for comparing all THINK students to other non-THINK SAUSD students.

### *Student Attendance*

Student attendance data were collected to address Performance Indicators #1 and #2. The data were provided by THINK to UCI to address four questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the students who attend the THINK SES program?
2. How many THINK SES tutoring sessions did the students attend?
3. How many students completed the program?
4. Did attendance vary by gender, grade level, or tutoring site?

### *Student and Parent Surveys*

In Year Three of the evaluation THINK Together staff distributed a total of four surveys:

- Pre-participation Student Survey
- Pre-participation Parent Survey
  
- Post-participation Student Survey
- Post-participation Parent Survey

The pre- and post-participation Student Surveys included several established measures of student outcomes: school work habits, efficacy and performance in math and reading, social competencies, and misconduct. The pre-participation Student Survey was administered to students by tutors at the school sites in January 2011. The post-participation Student Survey was administered by THINK tutors at the end of the SES program in May 2011. Versions in both Spanish and English were provided to the students.

SAUSD assigned 191 students to the THINK SES program across 30 the district's 33 SES eligible elementary, intermediate and high school sites. Of these, 127 students completed the pre-survey (nearly all of them completed it in English), 125 completed the post-survey, and 113 completed both. Pre- and post-participation scores of the 113 who completed both were analyzed to determine the Change Scores for these participants and the effect of SES attendance on the outcome measures: 1) School Work Habits; 2) Efficacy in Math; 3) Efficacy in Reading; 4) Social Competencies; and 5) Misconduct. The post-participation survey also included two measures of student experiences in the program: 1) Staff and Activities and 2) Peer Affiliation.

The pre- and post-participation Parent Surveys were distributed to parents of all SES students and were returned by the parents (or the students) directly to the school sites. Both Spanish and English versions of the survey were included. Of the 146 parents of those SES students who attended at least one SES session, 107 completed pre-surveys, 76 completed post-surveys, and 65 completed both pre and post surveys. The majority of parents (80-88%) completed one or both of the surveys in Spanish. The surveys focused on 1) reasons for enrolling in the SES program and for choosing THINK Together as the provider; 2) experiences interacting with THINK administration and staff; 3) perceived student work habits and performance at school; 4) perceived effects of SES tutoring on academic outcomes for their child at school; and 5) perceived effects of participation in the program on their child's relations with peers and THINK staff.

## OUTLINE OF REPORT

This report on the High Quality Supplemental Educational Services and Afterschool Partnerships Demonstration Project (HQSES) Final Report is organized into three sections (described below).

The *first section* reports findings from the qualitative component of the study (program observations, interviews and document analyses as well as parent survey data), highlighting replicable and scalable program practices that effectively work towards achieving the HQSES project goals as well as barriers and challenges that persist. First key findings of the qualitative study are highlighted followed by a presentation of the qualitative data and more detailed analyses.

The *second section* presents findings on program attendance, and is followed by a report of SES survey outcome data and student test scores. All THINK test scores are compared to those of SAUSD students next.

The report's *third section* summarizes highlights from both the qualitative and quantitative findings presented in the previous two sections, as well as recommendations for addressing the issues identified in the study related to the HQSES project performance indicators and the overarching goals of the SES and afterschool programs.

Appendices feature (a) measures used (surveys, observation and interview protocols); (b) program artifacts (sample letters to principals, sample SES student progress report form; and an SES Parent, Student and Teacher Pledge); and (c) tables summarizing observational data using the Promising Practice Ratings System (Vandell, et. al. 2006).

## SECTION I—FINAL REPORT OF QUALITATIVE STUDY FINDINGS

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Findings from the qualitative data collected in Year Three, 2010-11, of the HQSES evaluation study are presented in this section. This section identifies successful program management and staff development practices as well as ongoing challenges in the delivery of THINK's Supplemental Educational Services (SES) and its 21stCCLC/ASES Afterschool Program (ASP) from an *Aligned Delivery* approach.

The qualitative component of the evaluation focused on key aspects of program management and the quality of SES and ASP service delivery. Perspectives on what worked within the context of the Santa Ana Unified School District and the predominantly immigrant Latino community it serves were gathered across the three years of the HQSES study through interviews and surveys of THINK afterschool program site coordinators, SES tutors and program managers, SAUSD school principals and the parents of students participating in THINK's SES and afterschool programs.

Therefore, this section primarily addresses three Performance Indicators (PI) for the HQSES demonstration project related to program quality and student experience which are as follows:

**Performance Indicator #1:** *Effectiveness of the management structure as it relates to the programmatic and staffing logistics of enrolling and recruiting students into the blended THINK SES model.*

**Performance Indicator #2:** *Effectiveness of the retention strategies used by THINK SES staff.*

**Performance Indicator #4:** *Increase in the number of positive, supportive relationships that students have with adults and peers.*

Performance Indicator #3, *Percentage of THINK SES students who improved their performance on the CSTs*, is addressed in the following Section II, Year Three Quantitative Study Findings.

This section on the Qualitative Study Findings is organized in the following manner:

First findings related to program management and aligned delivery are presented; including (a) recruitment and retention strategies and challenges; (b) a description of key strategies that have evolved as part of the THINK's *Aligned Delivery* approach; (c) ways that THINK SES and ASP staff work to promote positive adult and peer relations; (d) specific staff development practices that support the HQSES goals.

Second, observational ratings of the SES and ASP programs using the Promising Practice Ratings System are summarized. Third, key stakeholders (principals' and parents') perceptions of program quality and student experiences and benefits from participation are presented, including related quantitative parent survey data.

## FINIDNGS—PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND ALIGNED DELIVERY

### *Recruitment and Retention*

The THINK Together’s SES program management team was able to develop several strategies for outreach to parents and school principals to improve the presence and regard of the THINK SES program in the SAUSD. SES and ASP staff coordinated efforts to inform parents of the opportunity of the Supplemental Educational Services program offered by the District and the benefits of choosing THINK as their SES provider, particularly for those parents whose students also attend the THINK afterschool program.

*I would say this year was probably the best of the three years, because we had 7-8 kids in THINK SES but the kids were all in the THINK after-school program. That helped attendance wise; it helped me keep track of them.*

—Site Coordinator

A key strategy was for lead SES management staff to maintain a regular presence of annual SES informational fairs sponsored by the district at different sites in the fall of each academic year . Program Director Elizabeth Morales explains that the information fairs have become a critical point of contact with the community allowing THINK to communicate to parents that in addition to Afterschool Program services they are now Experienced SES providers. At the information fair, one way Ms. Morales reached out to parents was by distributing poems she had written in dedication to students, teachers and parents [SES brochure in Appendix B: Program Artifacts]. In addition, she has featured articles about the THINK SES program in a local newspaper (in Spanish), as a strategy to build awareness in the community about this opportunity for parents and their students.

On April 28, 2011, THINK SES hosted a parent appreciation night inviting all parents whose students participated in the SES program in 2011. Parents had the opportunity to meet the SES administrative staff and to voice their appreciation and any questions or concerns. Students received a certificate of completion of the program and parents were given some tips on how they can continue to support their students’ academic success. SES Director Elizabeth Morales elaborates on the intention of these efforts:

*This year I did a parent appreciation meeting. I brought in all the parents and we had some prizes to raffle off and we got food and the whole purpose of having them over was to thank them for choosing THINK Together as their SES provider. Because we know there are many choices out there and it can be very overwhelming to parents when they go to an SES fair and they don’t know who to pick when some people are giving them a new computer, and others say they’ll get 15 hours [of tutoring] or 20, or 25... and when they hear the amount of hours they’ll get with us, which is the 33, or if the child has been going consistently they can go up to 40... so when they hear that 40 number they’re confused, they don’t know why TT gives so many hours. So the whole point of having them over was to explain to them about the program and that we are a non-profit organization and that we are really here to make a difference in the children’s lives, that we are very committed to closing the achievement gap.*

Other efforts to connect to parents include the dissemination of a parent, student and teacher pledge—written in Spanish and English by SES Director Morales—aimed at encouraging high expectations, patience and respect for the unique learning needs, and a special 18-month calendar to parents including monthly advice for parents to help their child succeed in school, helping their child with homework, getting involved with their child’s school, recognizing the importance of reading to children, promoting self-esteem, communication, positive discipline [see Appendix B for sample of pledge]. In addition, an end-of-program field trip incentive is offered to students who did attend the SES program and complete at least 33 sessions.

To ensure a high rate of initial retention, SES staff called the home of students who enrolled but did not attend the first day of the program. When a parent was not reached by phone, a note was sent home with the student reminding them of their SES assignment and schedule. At High Schools, call slips were sent to students and the principals agreed to include a reminder for students in the morning announcements at the site during the first week of March. Reasons why students decided not to participate or were unable to participate included: moving to another district, conflict in schedule with other afterschool activities that student is committed to, or with parents’ own schedule. At one school the site administration denied THINK SES access to a space for the delivery of SES services and the three students at that site who were originally assigned to THINK were assigned to another provider.

*This year, I think it was better organized on the coordination part of it and there was a lot more communication with us, between the site leadership and the actual coordinators of SES, which really facilitated making sure students got here.*  
—Site Coordinator

Although improvements in recruitment and retention practices were made across the three years of the the HQSES project, due to the process of assignment of SES providers in the SAUSD, THINK Together actually reduced its number of students enrolled in the program during the three-year study [see table 2 above; a detailed report on the the program attendance for Year Three is provided below in Section II].

In Year Two the THINK SES management was able to secure permission for the SAUSD to allow its site coordinators to keep SES applications in their THINK Afterschool Program office on each school site for parents to access, with the condition that THINK staff not promote the organization as a provider but merely indicate that their student might be eligible for SES services and to encourage parents to apply. This may have made it more probable for parents with their student in the ASP to apply for SES services. Moreover, site coordinators attest in interviews that having students in both programs facilitates their job overseeing the program and encourages attendance and improves retention:

*I would say this year was probably the best of the three years, because we had 7-8 kids [in THINK SES] but the kids were all in the [THINK] after-school program. That helped attendance-wise, it helped me keep track of them. My SES instructor knew where to go to get the kids. It was really easy this year, and I think that has*

*to do a lot with just the kids already being here for the program as far as retaining them. I wish there were more kids that had gotten it.*

In general, greater communication between SC and SES management has supported recruitment and retention of students in the program in Year Three, as a high school SC attested: “This year, I think it was better organized on the coordination part of it and there was a lot more communication with us, between the site leadership and the actual coordinators of SES, which really facilitated making sure students got here.”

However, an information gap remains with regard to serving students with special needs, in that pertinent information about their particular learning challenges and needs, such as information in their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), are not readily communicated to tutors. This can have negative consequences on student retention, as observed in the following case.

*I had this student who stopped coming. He had tested at the 8th grade level and he might've gotten two of them right on the pre-assessment. But we had sent a progress report to his teacher [who informed us] "He has an IEP." We didn't even know about it. The school can't give us that information so if the parents don't give it to us, then we don't know. We don't know what to do because we get a student and we're trying to teach them at the level that we got them at, and the teacher says, "He can't do this work. There's no way he can do this work." He just stopped coming. [The Site Coordinator] did everything - he knew his parents, he called them and he talked to the kid. But he didn't want to come, and I think this maybe had something to do with it.*

In another case, the SES instructor of an intermediate school student was having difficulty managing her behavior and keeping her engaged even though their sessions were one-on-one. In an interview the parent revealed that her daughter had an IEP and was in Special Education classes. The SES instructor had no idea and could have benefited from that information earlier in the program, and may have more readily sought support from SES staff to make her lessons more appropriate for that student.

### ***Aligned Delivery Approach***

In Year Two of the HQSES demonstration project, THINK Together launched its *Aligned Delivery* approach as the core programmatic design element of its HQSES model. Informed by the lessons learned of the Year One implementation experience the *Aligned Delivery* approach consisted of an overall effort to create specific curriculum and instructional strategies for both SES Tutors and ASP Program Leaders to implement in either program, providing coherence between the two, and expanding access to the benefits of intentional academic enrichment learning experience to the larger student population that THINK serves in its Afterschool programs, hence achieving the HQSES objective of greater articulation in the provision of Supplemental Educational Services and 21stCCLC/ASES Afterschool programming. Specific strategies adopted—and described more at length in the Year Two report—included:

- 1) Provide staff SES and ASP staff with parallel training experience such as expert side-by-side coaching to train site staff in academic enrichment activities that are aligned with school day ELA and Math.

- 2) SES administrators and ASP SC work to establish better relationships with school principals and grade level leaders: a) to figure out ways they can align ASP activities with academic goals of the school day and b) communicate with school principals regarding their students' progress in the SES program.
- 3) Creating a flexible curriculum model for SES instructors that allows them to access a range of resources while designing standards-aligned lessons that address specific academic content and skill development needs of students they tutor.
- 4) Fostering a shared set of Youth Development principals to guide staff (in both SES and ASP) in their interactions with students and between staff with the goal of creating safe learning environments and positive relations with adults and peers.

The positive impact that these efforts have had on the quality of program delivery for both SES and the ASP were evident in program observations and interviews with THINK staff and parents and in Principal surveys carried out in Year Three. The following dimensions of the *Aligned Delivery* approach are summarized: (a) Alignment with the School Day; (b) Alignment with SES; (c) Fostering Positive Adult and Peer Relationships (d) Staff Development.

#### Alignment with the School Day

Site coordinators report to have developed more communicative and collaborative relationships with school administrators and teachers. SCs for the most part reported feeling more comfortable approaching principals and engage in regular conversations about how to connect their program activities to the needs of the students and the school's goals. Site coordinators explain how this relation has unfolded at their sites: they reported how they were aligning the ASP curriculum with school day curriculum and gaining input from school day teachers on afterschool academic enrichment activities and communicating about students to better address their needs, receiving expert training from teachers and literacy coaches, collaborating on school events and generally maintaining ongoing communications with school administrators, counselors and teachers and serving as liaisons with parents and students. SCs from all levels, elementary, intermediate, and high school, were able to articulate how this collaboration takes place in the following very specific ways:

- *Because I'm here full-time and I have a really good relationship with my teachers. Actually, some of them do lesson plans for me. For example, although Math Explorer is great from Think Together, I have a math teacher who created this curriculum for sixth graders who are struggling with integers. We use that for sixth grade sometimes. [Another] a math and also science teacher here in the morning has donated lots of learning games/activities; a literacy coach here was invited [by the Principal] to train our staff on Thinking Maps. She trained us on what teachers are looking for in the writing, so we make sure that when we incorporate any type of English language arts activities, we're incorporating what they need to learn. We're always in communication or being trained by them in one form or another. —Elementary SC*
- *They use Open Court for their language arts, so they're able to get teacher editions of their Open Courts for each unit. [...] We have the pacing guide that I can get online and all that, but for me, trying to integrate that a little bit better by working with the teachers more. Make it fun for the kids, kind of disguise the learning somehow so that they're*

*doing synonyms but it's a fun synonym game [...] it'll say that they're working on addition or fractions, so that's just having them do the Math Blast games that we already have. —Elementary SC*

- *I am in constant communication with the teacher on special assignment at this school. She updates me on the different things that they're focusing on as far as independent reading or the kind of math facts they want kids to be practicing. Things like site word lists that she provides, vocabulary terminologies that she wants our kids to review. Then we fill those components in before homework/after homework or we devote it to a 15-30 minute lesson in addition to what we do. —Elementary SC*
- *[The Principal] has an open-door policy. I walk in there anytime I need something. With the teachers, I work with them, especially with students who they feel need extra help. For example [a teacher might say]: “[This student] needs extra help on this. Can you have a volunteer work with him on reading or fluency after they're done with homework?” I feel like the relationship that we have with them is great. They're very supportive, and so is the principal. I'm very lucky to have them. —Elementary SC*
- *Teachers refer students to me and give me updates on students. I talked to the social studies teacher when the 8th graders had to take the constitution test, he would give me a lot of materials. He also told me, “If you have any kids, refer them and I'll take them for a tutoring.” The teacher who does the Chico Program—a program for borderline kids that are ready to go to a continuation school—really wants to help them out and give them a second chance. They report to her, and she would give me a lot of materials on how to work with them, and I usually give updates to her. —Intermediate SC*
- *Teachers have been supportive. I've talked to many teachers. Some of them don't like the after-school program, but I'm trying to change that. Some of them do - they come and talk to me, and I've talked to some of the teachers regarding what's in the classroom that I can take into the after-school program. Overall, it's a very supportive administration with the after-school program. —Intermediate SC*
- *Besides referring kids to the program or reminding them of all the things we do [in the morning announcements], we have a teacher and a football coach who runs the tutorials. We have a counselor and an outreach consultant run our fitness class. We have the computer tech person, he works in the district and he runs our family computer literacy class for adults. So we have ESL classes for adults, and that's run by one of the counselors here on campus. And then we have a computer literacy class that's run by the computer tech from one of the intermediate schools. —High School SC*
- *We actually hire a lot of teachers to do our enrichment courses as well. We've hired a science teacher and a math teacher to do a kickboxing/MMA class. We hire some of our coaches to do weight-lifting class in the morning, and we have a girls' fit club in the afternoon. Most of our communication with administration is counselors. So we do bi-monthly meetings with the counselors, bi-monthly meetings with the principal, and bi-monthly meetings with some of the APs on site. We attend the department head meetings, the faculty meetings, and we do one-on-one meetings with the teachers when we need to assess how kids are doing. That's why we wanted this room out here [near the classrooms] so that we'll be in with the teachers. Especially this year, they've been coming to us for help with different things, like Dream week and things that they need our support with. We do a bunch of monitoring for them. [...] We spend our lunch breaks out*

*in the courtyard. It's a good way to bond with the teachers and help support the kids, to show that we're here - that's our main goal. We have all these resources, but if they don't want to use it or we don't collaborate together, then we're not doing what we're supposed to be doing. —High School*

### Alignment between ASP and SES

All site coordinators interviewed indicated that their role and responsibilities relative to the SES program were clear and manageable in Year Three of HQSES and that in general the program was running smoothly. SCs stated that they were able to work to support the SES Program and coordinate with SES instructors this year by “accommodating them with a room [for tutoring], attendance, communicating whether certain students were going to be absent [from the session], or communicating with parents if they did not show up to the program.” SCs in general stated that they interacted more regularly with SES instructors than in previous years.

In addition, having an SES instructor with experience working in the ASP was very beneficial to their integration into the ASP routine and school culture, as one SC explained:

*Luckily, we got a SES instructor that used to be one of our program leaders. So she's very similar with the structure of our after-school program and with the general flow of the school. I felt like we can really communicate, she understands the culture of this school and the policies. This year, we really wanted everyone to focus on safety and line-of-sight. For instance, we couldn't let kids leave by themselves to the bathroom or to retrieve anything. So she's very helpful in that regard. If she needed to meet me at a certain place, she knew where to find me. If she needs to get the kids at a certain place, she knew where to go; if some of her students were late, she knew exactly where to walk to them and how to contact the parents. It was very helpful [...] I'm glad that she has that ASP background because it helps tremendously.*

According to the SES director, an effort was made on the part of the SES administration to keep site coordinators informed about the SES program and indicate ways they can better coordinate with the SES instructors at their site. For example, SCs were requested to allow the SES instructor to use any extra walkie talkies they have on site in order to facilitate communication. SCs were encouraged to make regular visits to the SES tutoring space at their site and check in with their instructors. All SCs interviewed stated that they did observe the tutor(s) at their site and were generally satisfied with the quality of tutoring as reflected in the following examples:

- *The tutor I had, she would get here early. I'd see her prepare her things; she was great. I'm mostly there in the morning so I don't get to observe her for a lot, but she always had her stuff ready and the kids, whenever I did go in there to get other things, were engaged. They were doing their learning games, they were reading whatever they were supposed to be reading; so it definitely looked more effective than the other things that I would walk in for the other providers that were here. [With TT SES] it was clear for the kids that there was a plan, there was some kind of curriculum and that they were working on it. —Elementary SC*
- *I got to observe a little bit, not as much as I [would have liked to]. But from what I saw, I did see the students engaged and I like the fact the tutor brings in props and stuff like that. Which helped*

*them because it's very important for kids who are very visual, because we're all different learners [...] and I could see they were all engaged. We also had incentives right there, and sometimes they would ask me, "Can we get some incentives for them?" I would provide them with some, so that got them really motivated too.—Intermediate SC*

SES instructors were oriented to view the site coordinator at their assigned sites as the main point person and to make an effort to connect with other program leaders. As a result, site coordinators and tutors also noted improvements with regard to the coordination between the SES and ASP in Year Three of HQSES.

- *I got the feeling that they were a part of the same program, and the students felt the same thing, too. All of my students were part of the program. At Century, one of the students was a regular at the THINK Afterschool program and one of the other girls wasn't, so I told her about it and the other student would tell her, too. So she was trying to bring her into the program a little bit more.—SES Instructor*
- *Last year, part of what I try to introduce is the sciences. I noticed the site coordinator thought that was a fantastic idea. So this year, they had implemented science in their program, which they didn't have as much. I'd bring things from whatever I could find here plus my own, and I would just make simple science activities that I could do. And the kids just loved it. I would have my lessons in her small room, so when she would walk in and observe and say, "Oh, that's a great idea." —SES Instructor*
- *We had them sign in and come in the way our regular staff would. So they would come in, clock into the computer. Their folders would actually be back here, so they'd either have to talk to myself or [the other SC] before they got the folders. We'd kind of do a check-in with them, like "How's it going?" [...] last year, that was also an issue in that we'd had the SES sessions in the library, so the tutors would just come in and go. This year, we had them in their own rooms, so they had to check-in to at least get into the room. —High School SC*
- *[The SES instructor] would come in everyday and we'd check in and talk and see how I could help more. Because we have a lot of trouble getting certain students in SES—they just didn't want to come. Figuring out ways, so we'd call home and if that didn't work, we'd call them out of class and tell them they need to be there and do that sort of thing. —High School SC*

Although the SES Instructors and Site Coordinators attest to the improved coordination between both programs, the need to continue to build communication and collaboration between both SES and ASP programs remains. A few SES Instructors interviewed did report not feeling fully supported by the ASP staff at the site where they work, although this was not a prevalent issue.

Another important issue that surfaced through parent, SC and tutor interviews, as well as program observations, was the need for greater communication between the SES program staff and the teachers and school administration about the special needs of students. This problem was highlighted in the case cited above in which the SES instructor was unaware of a student's IEP and therefore unable to accommodate the student's particular learning needs, resulting in the student dropping out of the SES program. A similar situation came to light at another intermediate school where an SES session was being observed and it became evident that the student had behavioral and perhaps cognitive challenges. In the UCI researchers' interview with that student's parent it was communicated that her child had an IEP. Again, the student's SES instructor did not know this pertinent information, which could have helped the instructor make the tutoring sessions with this student more effective.

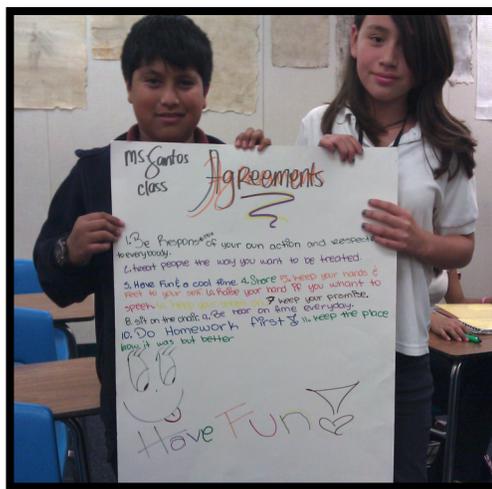
These two examples emphasize the need for the THINK SES administration to communicate better with schools and teachers to identify students who are enrolling in THINK SES who may require more specialized tutoring support. Likewise, instructors assigned to special needs students should be provided with the appropriate professional support so they can be effective tutors for these students.

Finally, a continued effort to convey to school administrators the key features of the THINK SES program [e.g. the individualized nature of the curriculum, the training and support provided to SES instructors] may help foster school support of the THINK SES program and improve the nature of the SAUSD schools' overall partnership with all THINK Together. To this effect, an SES instructor argued for more of an intentional effort to coordinate between the regular school day, ASP, and the SES curriculum:

*There's one thing I wished: I know it happened last year, but it happened where my lesson would also coincide with what they were learning at school. I felt like they were getting that double reinforcement, and I liked that a lot last year, it didn't happen this year. I didn't think about it until a student came up to me and had said, "I happened to be learning this and I learned that last week." I think it was intentional last year. I remember Elizabeth or Rosemary saying that they were trying to coordinate what they're learning in school to the after-school program and then to SES, so then they'd get three tiers. Many other things have improved and I'm so happy with what has gone on this year, but I think the students could've benefited even more if there was the parallel with school, after-school, and SES.*

## *Fostering Positive Adult and Peer Relations across Programs*

One of the hallmarks of quality of THINK staff across SES and ASP is their shared commitment to building a safe and nurturing learning environment for students in both programs. Evidence of this strong feature of THINK programs is reflected in the high observation ratings for adult and peer interactions in both programs. Continued success toward this fourth HQSES Performance Indicator—*building positive relationships with adults and their peers*—was documented across the three-year study, with the highest ratings on the PPRS 4 point scale achieved in this area. In Year Three, the mean scores for the Supportive Relationships with Adults in the ASP was 3.39 and in the SES program 3.94. Mean scores for Supportive Relationships with Peers in the ASP were 3.48 and 3.84 for the ASP and SES program respectively.



Staff in both programs were consistently observed interacting with students using supportive and encouraging language and referring to the agreements when students needed to be reminded of the groups' shared expectations of conduct, mutual respect for others and a commitment to being productive, learning, and having fun. This culture was also evident in the physical environment, particularly in the ASP where co-constructed agreements between staff and students were consistently posted in classrooms as part of the daily afterschool program set up.

### **SAMPLE AGREEMENTS (1<sup>st</sup> Grade)**

My commitment is to ...  
I promise to...  
Our class promises to sit in our seats!  
Stephanie promises to do her homework.  
Valentin promises to follow the agreements.  
Marlin promises to follow directions.  
  
Yahir promises to never say bad words.  
Jasmine promises to listen to the teacher.  
Alex promises to follow directions, agreements and everything.  
Alicia promises to be quiet.  
Sergio promises to finish his homework.

In interviews, both site coordinators and tutors were able to articulate their understanding of the important role of the quality or relationship between adults and students for creating the conditions for achieving program goals. In their regular Friday planning sessions, the SES instructors were consistently encouraged by the program director to make efforts to connect to students and build communication and trust. This focus on building relationships is exemplified in the following statements by SES instructors:

*In the beginning, they were rather apathetic: "I don't know if this is going to work. Who is this dude? Do you even know math?" They had this attitude, you could tell. But they got to know me, they're like, "He really does know what he's doing. He's actually helping me. Whoa." Once they figured out I'm coming here on my own volition to help, they're like, "He's not doing it because*

*he's being paid to or whatever. He's actually trying to help me." They changed the environment and how they felt about trying to do better. –SES Instructor, Intermediate School*

At a Friday Planning Meeting SES instructors shared the following reflections regarding the key role of building positive relations with students on the effectiveness of their tutoring sessions. These comments were offered as advice to two new SES instructors who were joining the group as everyone sat in a large circle:

- *Last year I had the same kind of misbehaviors...I was very stuck up about the standards the 1<sup>st</sup> year [tutoring]. You have to have that framework and lesson plan but not written in stone, you need to have that flexibility have to relax and talk to them. The first meeting: one, get to know them; two, set discipline rules don't just rattle off, get to discuss what is respectable. This year it's about empowering them they are coming from homes where you have to build that self-respect, don't make excuses. There is no need for them to fall behind, not so much that I have to do it because THINK Together is going to evaluate them, [but more because] you need to move them from here to here: number one get their trust.*
- *Get to know your students. It is important not be intimidated because their middle school. If they are getting out of control you need to pull aside and check them. I take into account what they have been through...I am not so strict on talking they are going to talk no matter what...but try to limit the communication as far as the standards we are working on. I set time for each standard to hit on each day...the debriefing last 5-10 minutes to slow it down at elementary pace so they can put in perspective and understand things and apply what they learn for that day.*
- *Really you have to go in there and genuinely care about these kids, go in and talk to them even if they are shy, nervous or scared. During the check-in talk to them while signing names: "what did you do on weekend, or plan to do?" ...let them know you care.*
- *During the lessons some get it faster than others, adjust to every kid...switch your focus on a kid [during the sessions] and get to know each of the kids; have them chat with each other; have them become a team. [In one of my groups] the peers jumped up and screamed [when one student in the group who was struggling got it right], they were happy for her...it makes a difference when kids are friends.*
- *Everyday I would make sure to tell him how great he was ...by the end he was crying because he was leaving.*

At the conclusion of the "circle", the SES program director reminded her instructors: *"Everything you said is so awesome and I am so proud of you. You guys are so great, everyone learned a little more [...]* ***Be prepared, be respectful, be responsible and have fun. It's not about the instructor it's about the Think Together agreements***".

These statements by the SES instructors themselves and the affirmation that followed from the program director show a level of conviction within the culture of the SES Program regarding the need to build positive relations with students and to foster respectful and supportive interactions between the students themselves. These practices were documented in the SES and ASP observations as well [see Appendix C for specific THINK staff practices related to supportive relations with adults and peers observed in a range of SES and ASP activities and their respective PPRS ratings].

## ***Staff Development***

### *Initial SES Instructor Orientation*

In Year Three, the 19 THINK SES Instructors serving the SAUSD received an initial 5 days of orientation and training prior to the inception of the SES tutoring sessions in early 2011. The 11 new and 8 returning SES instructors were introduced to, or reviewed, responsibilities and expectations of them as the primary deliverers of the program. They learned the basic protocols for conducting their assigned tutoring sessions, tracking student progress, lesson planning to meet individual student needs and effective tutoring practices. The SES Tutoring Handbook—a large binder including information related to the SES program operation, lesson planning, and instructional support materials—was distributed to each SES instructor. Their initial trainings included a review of English Language Arts and Math instructional strategies. These strategies included, reciprocal teaching [Predict, Clarify, Ask Questions and Summarize] and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) approaches for teaching English Language Learners.

Instructors are encouraged to become familiar with the resources made available and to take the initiative in the lesson planning process: to be creative while seeking to address the needs of the students they tutor. On one initial training day (January 5, 2011), Dr. Cyndee Zandeas (chief program officer for THINK Together responsible for training and staff development and for overseeing all K-12 Extended Learning programs) was observed offering the SES instructors a license to be proactive educators: “You’re the grown-up, decide how to fill the gaps” she asserted. She further suggested they use as their guide in developing and implementing lessons: “Three R’s: Relational, Relevant and Rigor”. She then reviewed the basic structure for the 90-minute lesson plans that SES instructors are charged with developing weekly with an emphasis on building the relationships with students, to ask questions, dialogue with peers, and problem solve:

*The first five minutes you are getting kids to transition from where they were to you. You have no way of knowing [them otherwise.]. You are just going to talk with them ‘How is your day going...’ The last 10 minutes you are going to debrief ...”What did we do today and how can we use that tomorrow?” All learning is one of three things: (1) some things you learn today you already knew, much learning is a confirmation, (2) sometimes you add something to what they already know, and (3) sometimes you offer a new experience: an ‘aha’ moment. [...] We spend a great deal of time rescuing kids and telling them what to do instead of encouraging them to figure it out. Ask questions, it’s not about you showing what you know. So help them think.*

At this same training the SES Program Director, Elizabeth Morales, lead a discussion on the THINK Together vision and mission and reviewed basic policies, safety procedures and guidelines of the organization. She articulated to SES instructors the three core goals of the SES program as follows:

1. 90% students complete all SES hours
2. 85% will improve
3. All stakeholders will be informed of student progress

The training session ended with SES instructors working in collaborative groups to create an inspirational poster on the SES program that reflected the learning they had achieved during their 5 days

of training. This activity set the tone for the collaborative Professional Learning Community (PLC) of which SES Director Ms. Morales insisted they were now a part.

### *Friday Planning Sessions*

Through interviews and observations, the key role of the Friday Planning Sessions—instituted in Year Two—was evident. SES instructors interviewed unanimously point to the three hours every Friday, during which they would receive information and ongoing training and orientation from SES administrators and worked independently with peer and expert support to plan their lessons for the following week, a key to their sense of competency as a tutor and to their success with students. These sessions allowed the instructors to feel as though they “were not the only one” struggling with an issue, and to seek the advice and “hear the opinions” of their peers and get ideas for curriculum material and instructional strategies that worked.

*The way that I can describe it is that the formal [training] is like the backbone. It's a skeleton, and then the Friday [planning sessions] fill everything in, it's the meat of it.*

*—SES Instructor*

Here are some of the comments SES instructors made on the value of these meetings:

- *The group meetings where we have examples, if other tutors are having problems and everyone gets together and talk about it [are the most valuable]. Because maybe it's something that we did not address, then we have that information that we can go back and use.*
- *I've been talking to the other tutors and that definitely helped. I feel like I have learned a lot listening to them. If I'm stuck with something I can ask, "I'm doing this... What do you suggest?"*
- *I like the Friday sessions because everyone's here. I was able to learn from everyone else, and if I was stuck on a specific standard or I didn't know how to make some kind of fun activity for them, I had people sitting at my table with ideas how to. So I like that we were all here.*
- *If left to my own devices, it would've been a horrible experience. I think definitely the lesson planning on Fridays [was most useful]. And on a more innocuous level, we become kind of friends, even if we only see each other once a week. We actually take time to figure out what's going on and help, and that benefits even if you're not having anything going on but just someone saying, "Hey, are you doing okay?" That moral support.*
- *The other district that I was at wasn't like this at all. We weren't made to come in uniform at a certain time on Friday, we could come in whatever we wanted. Here, it's completely different; I like this so much better. I could ask somebody about classroom management, like "What do you do?", or when we do the challenges and successes, I like that we all come together at the same time and we could all talk.*

A returning SES instructor speaks to the progress in the program's administration that she perceived over the three years of program implementation and the contribution that the Friday Planning sessions have made in improving the SES program in addition to the support received from the SES administrators and staff.

*I really see the growth from the beginning stages, to the challenges to improvements, and I just enjoy every year more than the last. I think a lot of it has to do with the Fridays. Even though it's once a week, I really look forward to the Fridays. [...] There's so much creativity in the room, it's like I can have one game and someone else can incorporate that game with something else; it just brings it to a whole new level. [...] The first year, it was very detached: "Here's your packet. Come pick up and then drop off." Then the second year, it's totally different: now you have to do lesson planning and you really get to know your co-workers. Since I enjoyed the second year a thousand times more than the first year, because the first year is really passive and the second year was really active. I was just excited to get back into lesson planning and bouncing ideas with your peers.*

### *Side-by-Side Coaching*

In Year Three, tutors experienced continued support through side-by-side coaching during their tutoring sessions. SES instructors perceived this approach as valuable:

- *The very first day I started, I had a visit from Elizabeth. She happened to come by and she actually did stuff. Because I hadn't received all the training, she stopped and sat with me when I was reading one of the books. She taught me, as she taught them, about reciprocal reading and doing the questions.*
- *Debra Horton [THINK academic coach] asked if she could interrupt me when she saw that I needed help in some form. I said, "Yes, absolutely." This was my second season working with SES. I started out my lesson and I was nervous having someone there to observe. But she made it easy for me, because she showed me certain techniques on how to teach. [...] I also had Elizabeth come in [to coach me]. It was an "a-ha" moment to me because I hadn't realized how to use certain games that we had. So actually watching her with the students—as she modeled—and I was, "Now I get." And I'm a very visual person.*
- *Debra came and she made different activities with timetables too. I explained to her, "This girl's good but she likes being challenged. Can you help me to get a different activity from the timetables? She needs help in her sevens." And she's like, "Sure." She said, "Draw a line or square, and divide it into seven parts. Now, put it in order." She gave me a different set of ideas.*

## *Challenges and Suggestions*

SES instructors communicated some concerns and suggestions for improving the program. Tutors requested a greater variety in curriculum resources made available. Because of some of the limitations they perceived in the materials made available to them, they indicated that they would resort often to researching and creating their own lessons. For example, as these two instructors explain:

- *It's all a little dry and unrealistic for the amount of time you have with them. It'd be nice if we had more variety [...] I would use the curriculum that was more inspiring and draw from that to make my own curriculum. [...] I even bought my own games like Apples to Apples Jr. games. They learned adjectives and synonyms. I went out and bought Scrabbles Slam, and I had flashcards. It would've been nice to have it here and not to have to go out of my way [to get more engaging materials]. Even if we shared it, that would've been nice.*
- *We had to make it colorful, more art, more craft, more hands-on kind of thing. I don't mind going out of my way and getting extra supplies to do an art activity, but it'd be nice if I can have access to it here.*

One of the challenges voiced by some SES instructors was how they felt overwhelmed by the vast information included in the Tutoring Handbook and advocated for key program information and tutoring strategies to be conveyed in a more succinct format.

Tutors also indicated that expert training and coaching did not occur as often as they would have liked. Although they appreciated the ongoing mentoring and opportunities for exchange of ideas and support from peers in the Friday sessions, they craved ongoing professionalization through more frequent content rich trainings that could expand their repertoire of effective tutoring strategies.

## **FINDINGS: OBSERVATION OF SES AND ASP AND PROMISING PRACTICES RATINGS**

In Year Three of the HQSES study positive indicators of promising practices continued to be observed across both the THINK afterschool and SES programs. As in Year II, students in the afterschool program or in their SES tutoring sessions were generally observed to be engaged in well-organized activities, facilitated by THINK program leaders or SES instructors who were seen being building positive relationships with students and fostering collaboration and mutual respect between students. Students were given choices when possible and challenged to solve problems, engage in discussions, work collaboratively and lead activities. In general, activities were appropriately structured and PL and SES instructors showed the ability to be flexible in order to ensure student engagement and meet student needs and interests. In some instances, students worked toward mastery in a particular skill or content area (especially in the SES Program), and in general seemed to be enjoying themselves.

### ***Promising Practice Ratings System***

In all three years of the HQSES Study, researchers used the Promising Practice Ratings System (PPRS) to structure observations of the SES and ASP and make qualitative ratings. The Promising Practices Rating System was developed for use in the Study of Promising After-School Programs, a national study of high-quality programs serving economically disadvantaged children and youth (Vandell et al., 2006). The PPRS considers 9 research-based promising practices constructs: (1) supportive relations with adults; (2) supportive relations with peers; (3) student engagement in activities; (4) opportunities for cognitive growth; (5) appropriate program structure; (6) opportunities for autonomy; (7) setting chaos; (8) staff over-control; (9) mastery orientation. [See Appendix C for definition of each construct examples of corresponding positive indicators].

In Year Three, a total of 85 program observations were carried out at 14 study sites in winter and spring of 2011 [compared to 82 observations at 17 sites in 2010] using the PPRS, including 27 SES tutoring sessions and 58 ASP activities. Although observations of a range of afterschool program activities were conducted, observers focused on academic enrichment activities implemented as part of the *Aligned Delivery* approach. During or immediately after activity observations, researchers took on-going observational notes and wrote justification comments for each PPRS rating given. [A summary of comments for each rating range (high 4-3) or low (2-1) is provided in Appendix C].

The following tables summarize mean observational rating scores per type of activity and per PPRS construct for both Year Two and Year Three showing that the mean ratings remained high or improved from Year Two to Year Three.

Table 5 summarizes mean scores for the academic enrichment and support activities in the afterschool program observed in Year Three and in Year Two in the areas of literacy, math and science, as well as computer lab activities in which students used software focused on academic skill development in reading and math. A high school credit recovery and tutoring session were observed in Year Three only. Although scores were generally high across both years, mean PPRS scores were somewhat higher for each area of academic enrichment and support activities in Year Three (2011) as compared to mean scores in Year Two (2010) for the same types of activities. Similarly mean ratings for various types of nonacademic enrichment and recreation activities, including team sports, leadership and various enrichment clubs (e.g. Arts & Crafts, Drama, Games, Skateboarding, Newsletter, Music, Guitar) were somewhat higher in Year Three as shown in Table 6.

Table 5: Mean Rating for Academic Enrichment and Support Activities (Year Two and Year Three scores)

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT & SUPPORT ACTIVITIES													
Type of Activity:	Literacy		Math		Science		His- tory	Computer Lab w/ academics		Homework		HS Credit Recovery & Tutoring	
	YEAR	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2011 only	2010	2011	2010	2011	2011 Only
# Observations	7	8	6	4	4	3	3	3	4	2	17	16	2
Mean Rating	3	<b>3.08</b>	3	<b>3.17</b>	3.2	<b>3.3</b>	<b>2.28</b>	3.2	<b>3.45</b>	2.9	<b>3.22</b>	<b>3.45</b>	

Table 6: Mean Rating for Afterschool Program Enrichment and Recreation Activities

ENRICHMENT AND RECREATION						
Type of Activity:	Team Sports & Organized Physical Activity		Character Education & Leadership		Misc. Enrichment (e.g., Arts and Crafts, Guitar, Skateboarding)	
	YEAR	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010
# Observations	11	1	3	2	6	18
Mean Rating	<b>3</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.22</b>

Table 7 shows mean ratings for observations of Supplemental Educational Services sessions in SES Language Arts (13 in Year Two and 14 in Year Three) and SES Math (10 Year Two and 8 in Year Three). Across both years the mean ratings remained high with slight improvement in the mean score for SES Math observations, from of a 3.3 in Year Two to 3.52 in Year Three, indicating the high quality of

instructional practices, the positive relationships and high levels of youth engagement, challenging curriculum, appropriate structure, and opportunities for mastery experienced in the SES program.

Table 7 Mean Ratings for SES Tutoring Sessions: English Language Arts and Math (Year Two and Year Three scores)

SES TUTORING SESSIONS			
SES English Language Arts		SES Math	
2010	2011	2010	2011
13	18	10	9
<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.52</b>

Tables 8 and 9 below show the mean ratings for each PPRS Construct in the aggregate of ASP and SES observations across all 14 study sites observed in 2011.

For the constructs related to **Performance Indicator # 4—Positive Relationships with Adults and Peers**—the mean rating for the THINK Afterschool program is 3.39 for “Supportive Relationships with Adults” and 3.48 for “Supportive Relationships with Peers”. For the THINK SES program the mean ratings were highest for relationships with Adults (3.94) and with Peers (3.84).

Mean scores for each construct within the SES Program in general were excellent: 3 and above for each PPRS construct except for “Opportunity for Autonomy” with a mean of 2.37 which is appropriate due to the highly structured nature of the SES tutoring sessions. However, tutors were observed integrating choice into activities whenever appropriate. Instructors were observed creating a learning environment where students were comfortable asking questions and interacting with their peers; hence across all 27 SES observations a mean score of 4 was achieved in that no evidence of “Over Control” was observed in a single session. At the same time SES instructors showed good group management strategies reflected in a 3.75 score for “Chaos” [few instances observed]. Both of these constructs indicate that tutors were able to establish a positive learning environment, supportive of relationship building—also articulated by the SES instructors in the above section—and hence further working to advance the goals of Performance Indicator #4 of the HQSES project.

Table 8: Mean Rating per PPRS Construct for Afterschool Activity Observations

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES									
# Sites (# Observ.)	Supportive Rel. w/ Adults	Supportive Rel. w/ Peers	Level of Engagement	Opport. for Cog. Growth	Appropriate Structure	Opportunity for Autonomy	Over Control*	Chaos*	Mastery Orient
6 Elem (32)	3.38	3.43	3.26	2.57	3.49	2.71	3.45	3.15	2.73
4 Inter (20)	3.28	3.67	2.97	2.4	2.97	3.12	3.63	3	2.36
2 High (6)	3.5	3.34	3.34	2.34	3.34	3.5	4	3.5	2.84
Mean THINK ASP scores across grade levels	<b>3.39</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>3.22</b>	<b>2.64</b>

Table 9: Mean Rating per PPRS Construct for SES Tutoring Session Observations

SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES									
# Sites (# Observ.)	Supportive Rel. w/ Adults	Supportive Rel. w/ Peers	Level of Engagement	Opport. for Cog. Growth	Appropriate Structure	Opportunity for Autonomy	Over Control*	Chaos*	Mastery Orient
Elem (15)	3.94	3.86	3.65	3.10	3.80	2.37	4	3.92	3.04
Inter (7)	3.88	3.67	3.5	3.25	3	2.25	4	3.33	2.75
High (5)	4	4	3.34	3	3.84	2.5	4	4	3.5
Mean THINK SES scores across grade levels	<b>3.94</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>2.37</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>3.1</b>

\*Over Control and Chaos are reverse coded; 4= no evidence of Over Control or Chaos, 1 = many negative indicators of Over Control and Chaos.

Promising Practice Ratings for each observation completed in Year Three—and from which the above mean scores are derived—are presented in Appendix C organized by type of activity and grade level. Mean ratings for all THINK Together Afterschool and SES program activity observations per PPRS construct for each study site are also presented in Appendix C.

## FINDINGS: STAKEHOLDERS PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRAM QUALITY

The previous sections described experiences of SES instructors and ASP site coordinators in the management of the SES program, and the coordination of the SES and ASP programs. This section summarizes data collected through surveys and interviews with principals and parents regarding their perceptions of the SES program quality and benefits of student participation in a blended program approach, as well as any feedback these key stakeholders have to help inform the continued improvement of program services.

### *Principals' Perceptions*

Principals of the 14 study sites were sent an electronic five-question survey by email at the end of the academic year in June 2011 requesting they provide feedback on THINK SES program [see Principal Survey in Appendix A, Study Measures]. Included in the survey was a summary of the pre-post SES assessment scores for the students who completed the THINK SES program at each principal's respective site. Seven principals responded to the survey (from 5 elementary and 2 intermediate schools).

Of the seven respondents, 5 stated that they were able to visit and observe (however briefly) any of the THINK Together SES tutoring sessions at their site during spring of 2011. An elementary principal noted, "I walked through a few times", and an intermediate school principal commented, "I was able to briefly visit one class to make sure they were doing OK."

Principals were asked, "What was your impression of the quality of tutoring services provided". One elementary principal commented, "although I do visit our after school programs frequently, I could not tell you which were SES." All five principals who had observed at least one SES session commented positively:

- *The quality was OK; I just had to remember that the tutoring was done by paraprofessionals, not credentialed teachers.—Elementary*
- *Based on your findings [pre-post THINK SES assessment] they seemed to do better after the program was completed. The THINK Together is a very positive program on our campus.—Elementary*
- *Positive impression from brief walkthrough.—Elementary*
- *A positive experience was observed with quality of curriculum aligned with standard-based instruction.—Intermediate*
- *It appeared that things were going well, however, I was there for a brief moment. I didn't have the opportunity to assess the curriculum.—Intermediate*

Principals seem to recognize the benefit of the HQSES blended program approach when asked how they believed their "students might benefit from receiving a comprehensive set of program services combining small group or one-on-one SES tutoring along with diverse afterschool enrichment activities?" Of particular value to principals is the individualized attention given to students who participate in the SES program. An Intermediate principal suggested that such

“benefits could be measured on CST benchmarks and common assessments.” The other 5 principals remarked as follows:

- *I think that students benefit from more attention and direct feedback which is possible during small group and one-on-one.* —Elementary
- *Students do benefit from one-to-one tutoring and smaller group size.* —Elementary
- *I believe students benefit immensely from focused and targeted instruction.* —Elementary
- *They should do well.* —Elementary
- *I believe that students who receive more individualized attention can benefit and make great gains.* —Intermediate

To keep principals informed about the THINK SES program, they received monthly reports on the progress students at their site were making on three standards-based learning goals that were developed as a result of the student’s intake assessment to the program. The report includes progress on STUDENT LEARNING GOALS (rated as “Strong”, “Satisfactory”, “Slow” or “Unsatisfactory” progress), and GENERAL PROGRESS (rating their effort in Interest in Improving, Motivation, and Program Attendance as “Excellent”, “Satisfactory” or “Needs Improvement”) [see sample principal letter and progress report in Appendix B]. In addition, principals receive a summary report showing the pre- and post-assessment scores for their school’s individual students at the end of the program.

These pre-post assessment scores for students at their site were provided along with the question: “Were you satisfied with the progress of these students? All but one principal responded “Yes”. A total of 45 students were served across all 7 sites. Twenty of those students showed that their scores improve more than 50% between pre and post assessments and only 3 showed no improvement. The one principal who simply answered “No”, had eleven 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students complete the program, 3 of which showed no improvement between pre and post scores, with the 7 remaining students showing a range of 8% to 83% improvement in their post assessment scores as compared to their pre assessment scores. The other 6 principals had a range of 1 to 18 students who completed the THINK SES program at their site with all students showing improvement ranging from 8.3% to 83% with 20 showing post assessment scores that improved by 50% or more, and 7 students across the 45 sites scored 100% (getting all 12 items correct on the post assessment). Three principals made additional comments about their students’ performance on the SES assessment.

An intermediate school principal whose 5 students all improved—including an 8<sup>th</sup> grade male student who scored 75% higher in mathematics, from getting 2 items correct on the pre assessment and all but one (11 correct) on the post assessment, and a 7<sup>th</sup> grade female student who improved by 58.3% having responded to only 3 items correctly on the pre assessment and 10 on the post—offered this observation: “***Based on your findings they seemed to do better after the program was completed. THINK Together is a very positive program on our campus.***”

An elementary principal commented on her 3 students’ progress (showing 16.67%, 25% and 50% improvement), “Since I know them, I feel that they did the best they could.” Another

principal with 18 students (grades 3-5) having completed the SES program at an elementary school site—all of which showed improvement from pre to post scores ranging from 8.33% (getting 1 to 2 more items correct) to 66% improvement (getting 8 more items correct)—expressed satisfaction with the progress made by the students at his site, but also wanted to know more about the SES program and how student progress was measured. He added, ***“I’m happy to see some of the wonderful growth listed below and would certainly be interested in finding out more about the pre/post assessments and the curriculum materials utilized.”***

Finally, principals were asked to comment of ways THINK Together can improve the SES services it provides at their school site. Principals offered the following feedback and suggestions:

- *Consider a longer span of time to offer services so that students receive more hours of instruction. —Elementary*
- *The most important aspect in successful tutoring is the tutor. Please ask for principal input as far as the effectiveness of the tutor, similar to what you do for the summer program. —Elementary*
- *A formal meeting, with set goals for each student in the SES program. —Elementary*
- *Without spending more time observing the program it is hard to assess, however, it would be beneficial if the tutor contacted the teachers of the students to get feedback about their progress in class. —Intermediate*
- *As mentioned in [my response to question] number 4, I’d love to know a bit more about the curriculum and pre & post assessments. —Intermediate*

In summary, principals seemed generally satisfied with the THINK Together SES program, believed that a comprehensive SES and ASP experience benefits students. They also communicate a desire to be more informed about the curriculum and assessments used in the program as well as suggest ways to formalize their involvement through opportunities for principals to meet with THINK SES staff to set goals and to provide principal input on tutor selection. Principals would like to see improved communication between SES instructors and students’ classroom teachers to better address individual student needs, and also request more hours of instruction to further the positive impact of the individualized tutoring students receive in the THINK SES program.

## *Parents' Perceptions*

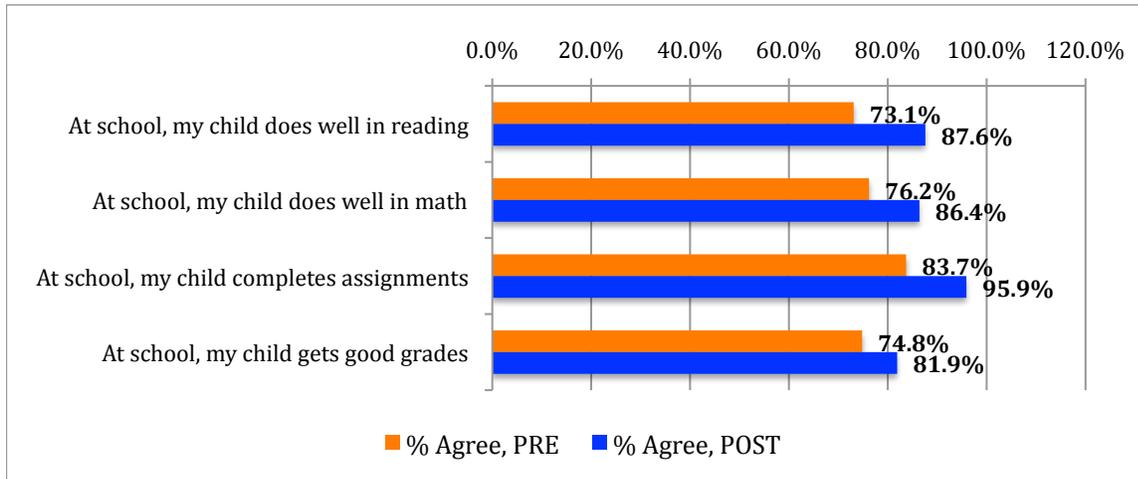
### Quantitative Findings: Parent Surveys

THINK staff sent pre-participation surveys to parents at the beginning of the THINK SES program (January 2011), and post-participation surveys at the end of the THINK SES program (April 2011). Parents returned completed surveys, in sealed envelopes, directly to the THINK sites. Both English and Spanish versions of the survey were included. 107 parents completed pre-participation surveys and 76 parents completed post-participation surveys; 64 parents completed both pre and post surveys. The majority of parents (80-88%) completed the Spanish version of the surveys.

The parent surveys were comprised of two types of questions: parents' perceptions of their child's abilities and program experiences, and feedback about various elements of the THINK SES program. Questions about the child focused on perceptions of the child's work habits and performance at school; the child's experiences in the THINK SES program, and the child's motivation to attend the program. Feedback about the program included questions such as: the parent's reasons for choosing the THINK Together program for their child; experiences interacting with staff at the THINK main office; opinions about the number of sessions offered; and the importance of the fieldtrip as a motivator for attending the program. Many parents also wrote in additional comments about the program at the end of the survey (see section that follows on Qualitative Findings: Parent Surveys and Interviews).

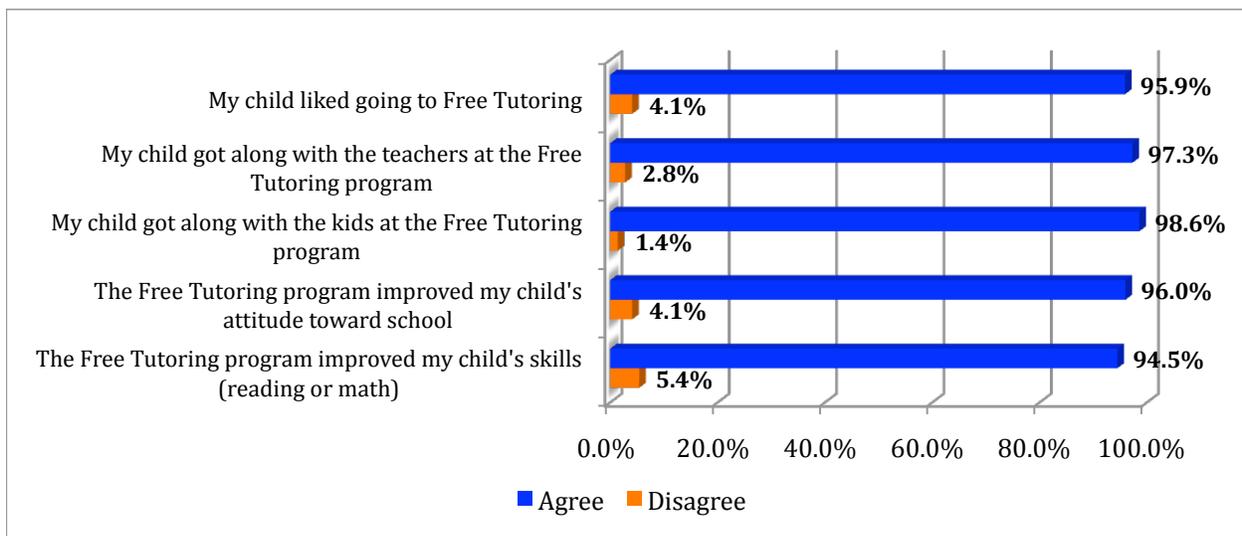
Overall, survey results show that parents were satisfied with the SES program, and believed that the program was a positive experience for their child. The majority of parents perceived that their child was doing well in school: reading, math, completing assignments, getting good grades. On a 6-point scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree", over 73% of parents agreed with every one of the 4 items on the pre-participation survey. On the post-participation survey, the percent of parents that perceived their child was doing well in school increased to about 82-96%. Chart 1 shows, for each item, the percent of parents who agreed with each statement, on both the pre and post surveys.

Chart 1: Parent Perceptions of Child’s School Performance, Pre (n = 107) and Post (n = 76)



Five items on the post-participation survey asked for the parent’s perceptions of their child’s experience in the THINK SES program. Over 94% of parents agreed with each of the five statements, responding that their child liked the program and got along with the kids and teachers there. They also agreed that the program improved their child’s attitude toward school, as well as their child’s skills (reading or math).

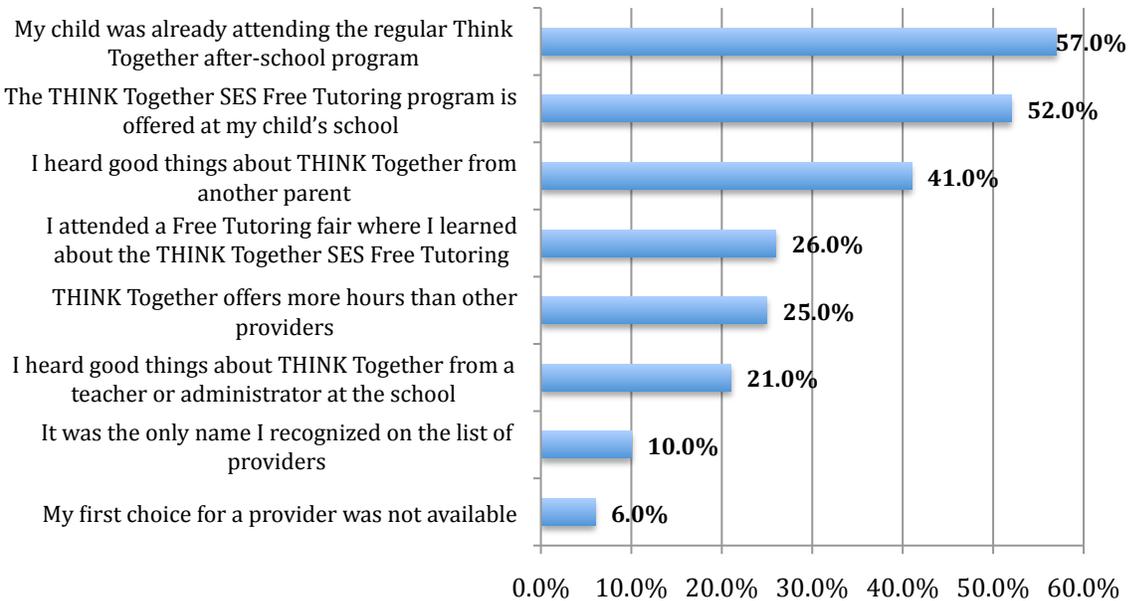
Chart 2: Parent Perceptions of Child’s Experience in SES Program (n=107)



On the pre-participation survey, 107 parents responded to the question “Please tell us why you chose THINK Together as the provider of Free Tutoring for your child?”. Parents selected one or more responses from the eight choices listed. Most of these parents selected only one response, but some selected two or more responses from the list. The chart below shows the percent of parents, out of 107, that chose each of the eight responses.

Most parents (57%) chose the THINK Together SES program because their child was already attending the regular THINK Together program and 52% chose the SES program because it was offered at their child’s school. About 41% of the parents chose the SES program because they had heard good things about THINK Together from another parent. Very few parents (6%) responded that they chose THINK SES because their first choice of provider was not available.

Chart 3: Reasons for Enrolling Child in THINK SES Program (n=164)



In response to the questions about SES program attendance, the majority of parents (75% or more) agreed with every one of the eight statements. Most parents (75%) thought that the number of SES hours offered was just right; some parents (19%) thought the number of hours was too few. Almost all of the parents (99%) agreed that it was important for their child to attend all of the sessions. Most of the parents (88%) agreed that the fieldtrip motivated their child to attend all of the sessions, but at the same time, almost all of the parents (99%) agreed that even if there were no fieldtrip, they would still enroll their child in the THINK SES program. 93% of the parents agreed that it was valuable to see their child’s monthly progress reports.

Almost all of the parents (96%) agreed that they would recommend the THINK SES program to other parents. With regard to the coming school year, 96% of parents also agreed that they would enroll their own child in the THINK SES program, if he/she were eligible.

74 parents reported calling or visiting the THINK Together office one or more times. Of those parents who did call or visit, 75% said that they were able to talk with someone who could answer their questions and resolve any problems.

## Qualitative Findings: Parent Surveys and Interviews

In addition to responding to survey questions at the beginning and after the end of the SES program, parents were given the opportunity to provide written comments. In the pre-participation survey 10 parents wrote comments and 42 parents commented in the post-participation survey. Nearly all parents wrote their responses in Spanish<sup>1</sup>. Three wrote comments in English.

*I like the THINK Together program because it encourages children to excel and in a fun way. My children like the program and as a mother I like it as well.*

—Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student

### *Reasons for Selecting THINK as SES Provider*

In both the parent pre- and post-participation surveys, parents were provided a space to write an “other reason” for choosing THINK as their SES provider. A total of 18 parents (10 in the pre, and 8 in the post-survey) wrote comments to this question. Parents took the opportunity to express their appreciation for the tutoring services provided and their recognition of the quality of THINK Together’s tutoring and afterschool program services in addressing their child’s academic development needs. They commented as follows:

- *Because I have heard good things about the program.* —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *My son had the TT tutoring program last year and I liked it.* —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *I like how they teach. He wants to learn mathematics and language.* —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *They help my son with his homework and in other abilities, thank you very much.* —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *Because I want my son to take advantage of this program for his education and to improve in his studies at school, because he is doing very badly, he does not do his homework and his grades are low.* —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *I like the tutoring program because it helps my children. They have a lot of time within the [afterschool] program [but] don’t always finish their homework, because they give little time for homework.* —Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student
- *The program is excellent because the children like it and because they help them with their homework and they have a good time.* —Parent of 5<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *Because this program helps them a lot and they learn new things.* —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *Because it is one of the best programs, they help a lot of children like my son. I am very happy with the programs [SES & ASP] because they help with many of our children at the school: may God bless you and may you continue forward. Thank you.* —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *Besides [the program being at the school site] he needs help in the subject of mathematics.* — Parent of 9<sup>th</sup> grade student

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<sup>1</sup> Nearly all parent comments were originally written in Spanish and translated into English by UC Irvine researcher, Pilar O’Cadiz, unless otherwise indicated.

In the post-participation survey, 8 more parents provided similar responses to this question, in particular pointing to the THINK Together’s good reputation in the community and the perception that they provide a quality program:

- *We very much like what they offer and the hours that they help the children.* —Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student
- *To help my daughter in mathematics.* —Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student
- *So that she learns to read.* —Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student
- *I know about the Think Together program.* —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *[The TT program] is very recognized by many parents.* —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *My son needs help in reading and writing.* —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *Because this program teaches them more than others.* —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *Because she needs help.* —Parent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade student

In the post-participation survey parents were provided with opportunities to write comments in response to 3 additional questions that were not on the pre-participation survey. In addition to being asked for other reasons for choosing THINK as their SES provider [noted above], parents also were asked to comment (1) on their satisfaction with the number of sessions (27) that were offered in the THINK SES program; (2) any interaction they had with THINK SES administrative staff; and (3) to provide any other comments or suggestions regarding the THINK SES program. A total of 42 parents choose to comment on at least one of the questions.

#### *Number of Sessions Provided*

Parents were asked, “If you think 27 session was too many or too few, how many sessions do you think would have been best for your child? In total 27 parents wrote responses, with 7 indicated that a specific number of sessions they thought would be best. They responded either suggesting a discrete total number of sessions (35, 36, 50), or a range of sessions (30-45 or 40-45).

Other parents commented generally on the need for more sessions:

- *I loved the program it helped my daughter go up in her mathematics and I think that if there were more sessions she would be even better, thanks for you support.* —Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student
- *I would like for the tutoring classes to last longer.* —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *All [the sessions] that are possible.* —Parent of 5<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *I think that if they had more it would be better for the children so that they can maintain their level and others get better, thank you.* —Parent of 7<sup>th</sup> grade student

One parent whose student attended a school were the SES group had 6 students stated:

- *I think that helped him more to get ahead and but it would be better if they had smaller groups so that the teacher could give them more time and patience to help him understand. —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student*

Seven parents noted that 27 sessions were “sufficient”, “perfect” and “fine” and others simply stated their satisfaction with the program and provided the following positive feedback:

- *I think that the 27 hours were sufficient for my son to improve. I would like to give thanks to you for your support of my children and I hope you continue to offer the same program in the future. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I think everything is fine and thank you very much, as a mother of the student I am very grateful and happy with [the TT] program. —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *My kids were motivated [to go to their sessions]. —Parent of 5<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I am happy with the program and it helps my son a lot. —Parent of 3<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *We are very happy because the boy advanced in the areas he needed to work on. It is a good solution for helping our children. Thank you. —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *It was all good. —Parent of 5<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *As far as I can tell as a mother, for my son it was very good. —Parent of 5<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I am happy with the hours that my daughter [did] she liked attending [the program] with the teacher and her friends and she did not get bored or tired of going to the program. Thank you very much. —Parent of 5<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I am thankful for the time that they helped my daughter and for their patience with her. I am not sure if she did more or less than 27 sessions, but what I am sure of is that if you had not helped her she would not have gotten ahead, that is why I give many thanks. —Parent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade student*

### *Communication with THINK SES Office*

Parents were asked about their experience contacting the THINK SES administrative offices and speaking with staff, 6 parents commented stating that staff were “very nice” and “kind”. One parent wrote: “*They are very nice and they help all they can with our children, thank you very much.*” Another parent of a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student wrote, “*Thank you for taking care of my son. He missed some classes, thank you for calling me. Thank you to the instructor who gave the class, she was very amiable.*”

However, another parent of a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student wrote: [I called] because when they tested her they said she needed help in Mathematics (and in fact that is the area in which she is doing terribly, always getting “F”) and when she started the program they only gave her Language Arts and no help in Mathematics. On the survey the parent marked that her question “not resolved”.

### *Perceived Benefits of SES Participation*

Post-Survey prompted parents to provide “any other comments or suggestions about the Free Tutoring program”. Thirty-six parents wrote general comments regarding the THINK Together (TT) SES program ranging from expressions of gratitude for the academic support offered to their child to statements of perceived progress achieved as a result of the tutoring received.

Parents statements regarding their perceptions of the quality of THINK SES program and of their child’s academic improvement as a result of their participation are presented below:

*I would recommend this program [THINK SES] to parents because it helps children a lot and they explain things well and help them in the subjects that they are not doing well in.*  
—Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student

- *Thank you for the TT program. My daughter has improved in school and I hope that for next year they offer the program again. So that with great pleasure I may enroll my daughter. I also hope that she can go with the same teacher. Thank you for your support.* —Parent of 3rd grade student
- *It is an educational program that is very good for the children to learn and develop in different subjects.* —Parent of 3rd grade student
- *For me as a mother as well as for my daughter everything was very good. I think my daughter advanced a little more with her reading and writing.* —Parent of 3rd grade student
- *My comment is that they helped my daughter a lot in the program, moreover in the area of mathematics. Thank you for offering this program and for selecting my daughter.* —Parent of 3rd grade student
- *I would recommend this program to parents because it helps children a lot and they explain things well and help them in the subjects that they are not doing well in. Thank you very much to the TT program, to my son’s teacher, I am very grateful.* —Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student
- *Thank you for helping my son with what he needs for his studies and homework, since sometimes we cannot help him.* —Parent 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student
- *I think that it is a very good that the schools are concerned so much with the academic advancement of the children and that they facilitate having these programs that help us so much. Thank you very much!* —Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student
- *My daughter learned a little more. They helped to her to get ahead in school. Thanks for everything.* —Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *I think my daughter is doing better in school than she was before. And thank you for helping my daughter for free tutoring. [English]*—Parent of 5<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *I congratulate you and thank you because the program helped my daughter a lot.* —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student
- *For me the tutoring program is very important because it provides them with academic support and the children benefit greatly from that help because it is important for them to*

*feel that they are supported and helped when they need it. I am grateful for the program and for the help you offer to our children and to us. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*

- *It is a great help to all the children; in particular they helped my son very much. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *Thank you very much for the tutoring of my son in every way, in his attitude and his [academic] development. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*

General satisfaction and appreciation for the THINK SES Program and parents' intention to continue to take advantage of the free tutoring support for their child were expressed in the following statements:

- *I would like to thank you for the support to my son and I hope that you continue to provide this same program in the future. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I am very happy [with the program] and grateful to THINK Together. Thank you for all the help you offer us. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *Everything was fine. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *Thank you very much for helping my son. I hope that all the sessions will help him in some way. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *We parents hope that they continue to offer it, as it is a very good program. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *As I mentioned before, I loved the program, it would be good to have many programs that provide so much help to our children and to parents too, thank you very much. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *This is one of the best programs that I know of. Thank you very much. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I would like for the program to continue. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *Thank you for everything. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *Thank you for this program because my son appreciated it very much. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I am very thankful for the program and for the having helped my son. I would like to enroll my son in the program next year, God willing. Thank you for having these programs. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*

In addition to the parent surveys, five parents agreed to be interviewed in Year Three. They were asked similar questions regarding how they found out about the SES program, why they choose THINK as a provider and whether they believed their student benefited from participation in both the SES tutoring and afterschool programs provided by THINK Together. All five parents were very pleased with the quality of the SES program and appreciated the added value of the enrichment and homework help their child received in the afterschool program. One recently immigrated parent explained how she became aware of the availability of the SES and afterschool programs offered by THINK Together at her child's school and worked to enroll her in both:

*Her friend was staying in the afternoons and my daughter would say to me, mommy let me stay cause I get bored at home. So I walked around and saw that they help them here with their homework and everything that one does not understand. I became very interested and I called and got her on the waiting list for the ASP and finally I got her into the program and I am very happy. Having her in the [afterschool] program helps me a lot because it is letting me look for work. [And], I have never known about the SES program, because as a mother from our country it is different and one is not prepared. Sometimes I cannot help the girl with her homework and that is why she got behind. So when I saw this program I liked it a lot and asked the teacher to help me so that my daughter could stay and enroll in SES the next year.—translated from Spanish*

### *Suggestions for Program Improvement*

Only three of the surveyed parents expressed dissatisfaction or indicated an issue with the SES or afterschool program: namely, that the sessions were not engaging enough for their child, that they should have opportunities to make up missed sessions and that the afterchool program should provide more time for homework completion. Parents expressed these concerns as follows:

- *I did not see that she improved in her reading because I found out from her teacher that she has not gone up in reading [level]; there are only a few words that she knows. We do not see that she is improving. Thank you for your attention.—Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I would like for when the child was sick that he could make up the session.—Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*
- *I think that the afterschool program should give more time for doing homework because my girls do not finish. —Parent of 6<sup>th</sup> grade student*

One parent expressed dissatisfaction with the program because it did not seem to engage her 5<sup>th</sup> grade son. She stated, “based on the comments that my son gives me of his class on some occasions it did not keep his attention. I think they should be a little more engaging so to motivate the students.” Another commented that her 5<sup>th</sup> grade student needed more tutoring: “I am very grateful for the help for [my son] with mathematics but I think that he still could have used more help.”

A few parents voiced suggestions for improving the program or expanding services. For example, a parent of an 11<sup>th</sup> grade high school student requested that “the sessions be right after the [regular] school classes.” Most likely this student was assigned the second session, one hour and a half after school ends and was not enrolled in the 21stCCLC funded high school program at that site, which would allow them to have access to other activities on campus while they waited for their tutoring session. Site coordinators have indicated that they do talk to parents and try to recruit SES students who are not already enrolled in the afterschool program to help mitigate the scheduling issue.

Finally, a parent of an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student stated in English that they would “really appreciate it if there would be THINK Together programs in high schools so my son would keep on getting the amazing help THINK provides so he can excel forward,” indicating that she was unaware that

THINK indeed is a provider for SES eligible High Schools in the District and that the SAUSD prioritizes high school students in assigning applicants to an approved provider. This comment suggests that THINK SES should make an effort to inform parents of students who are transitioning from elementary to intermediate school and from intermediate to high school to let them be aware that students at all grade levels may receive SES services if they meet the District's criteria for receiving SES services, attend an eligible school, and are selected to receive the free tutoring services.

## SECTION II—FINAL REPORT OF QUANTITATIVE ANALYSES

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This section presents the results of the quantitative analyses of data collected from students in the Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) during the 2010-2011 school year. The quantitative data analyses examine: (1) attendance in three THINK programs (regular afterschool, supplemental, and Supplemental Educational Services - SES) during 2010-2011; (2) student surveys of the quality of their SES program experiences completed by all students who attended the THINK SES program; (3) student performances on the THINK Assessment collected at the beginning and end of the SES tutoring program, and (4) student performances on the California Standards Tests (CST) and California English Language Development Test (CELDT) in 2010 and 2011.

The results are divided into two main parts: (1) analyses of data from students who participated in the SES program and (2) analyses of data from students in SAUSD who participated in the regular THINK afterschool program, supplemental THINK activities, the SES tutoring program, and no THINK related activities) on student outcomes.

### **FINDINGS: SES ATTENDANCE IN 2010-11**

This section presents findings pertaining to student enrollment and attendance in the THINK Together SES 2010-11 program. These findings pertain to Performance Indicators #1 and #2 of the HQSES demonstration project.

#### Performance Indicator #1: **Enrollment**

Originally, 191 students were enrolled in the THINK SES program in the 2010-11 academic year. Of these enrollees, 146 students attended at least one tutoring session of the SES program (beyond the initial assessment). These 146 students were designated as program attendees. Students who were assigned to the program but never attended are included in the following tables as Leakage (n = 45).

The following table shows the distribution of students in each category, by gender and grade level. There was no significant difference in gender distribution; female and male students were equally likely to attend the program. Of those students who were originally enrolled, elementary students were more likely to become attendees at the SES program ( $p < .01$ ).

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Table 10: Enrollment by Grade Level

	SES Enrollees (n = 191)	SES Attendees (n = 146)	Leakage (n = 45)
<u>Gender</u>			
Female	83 (43.5%)	62 (42.5%)	21 (46.7%)
Male	108 (56.5%)	84 (57.5%)	24 (53.3%)
<u>Elementary</u>			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	3 (1.6%)	3 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	38 (20.0%)	35 (24.1%)	3 (6.7%)
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	33 (17.4%)	28 (19.3%)	5 (11.1%)
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	28 (14.7%)	22 (15.2%)	6 (13.3%)
<u>Middle/High</u>			
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	20 (10.5%)	16 (11.0%)	5 (11.1%)
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	16 (8.4%)	13 (9.0%)	3 (6.7%)
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	13 (6.8%)	11 (7.6%)	2 (4.4%)
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	22 (11.6%)	9 (6.2%)	13 (28.9%)
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 (4.2%)	6 (4.1%)	2 (4.4%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5 (2.6%)	2 (1.4%)	3 (6.7%)
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	4 (2.1%)	1 (0.7%)	3 (6.7%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>146 (76.3%)</b>	<b>45 (23.7%)</b>

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The following table shows, by school site, the distribution of students who were enrollees in SES, those who were SES attendees, and those who did not attend (Leakage).

Table 11: Enrollment by School

<u>Elementary Schools</u>	Original Enrollment (n = 191)	Study Sample (n = 146)	Leakage (n = 45)
Wilson Elementary	18	18	0
Diamond Elementary	4	4	0
Garfield Elementary	11	11	0
Roosevelt Elementary	1	0	1
Davis Elementary	6	5	1
Edison Elementary	5	5	0
Esqueda Elementary	1	0	1
Romero-Cruz Elementary	4	3	1
Lowell Elementary	7	6	1
Adams Elementary	4	4	0
Walker Elementary	6	5	1
Franklin Elementary	2	2	0
Hoover Elementary	2	2	0
Lincoln Elementary	9	8	1
Kennedy Elementary	3	2	1
Monte Vista Elementary	4	3	1
Carver Elementary	1	1	0
Fremont Elementary	2	0	2
Jackson Elementary	4	2	2
Jefferson Elementary	4	3	1
Sepulveda Elementary	4	4	0
<u>Middle Schools</u>			
Lathrop Intermediate	4	1	3
McFadden Intermediate	6	5	1
Carr Intermediate	5	5	0
Sierra Intermediate	7	4	3
Willard Intermediate	4	3	1
Spurgeon Intermediate	13	11	2
Villa Intermediate	7	7	0
MacArthur Intermediate	4	4	0
<u>High Schools</u>			
Saddleback High	6	3	3
Valley High	16	7	9
Santa Ana High	8	5	3
Century High	7	3	4
Chavez High	2	0	2

Performance Indicator #2: **Attendance**

Of the 146 students who attended at least one SES session, most (83.6%) were English Language Learners. Among the ELL students, the majority (82%) scored at the Beginning, Early Intermediate, or Intermediate level on the CELDT overall test, and over half (56%) scored at the Beginning or Early Intermediate level on the reading component of the CELDT test.

The majority of SES participants (62.9%) qualified for free or reduced price lunch. Almost 60% of the parents of the students were not high school graduates. The table below summarizes the characteristics of the SES attendees.

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Table 12: Characteristics of SES Attendees (n = 146)

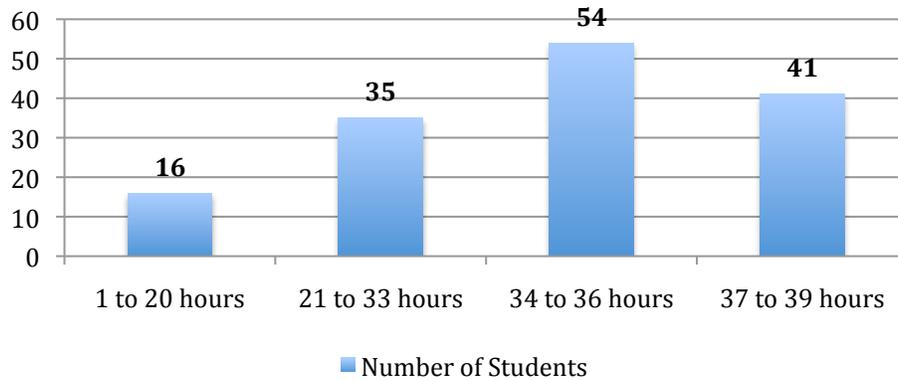
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English Proficiency		
English Language Learner (ELL)	122 (83.6%)	
Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)	13 (08.9%)	
English Only (EO)	11 (07.5%)	
CELDT 10-11 Proficiency Level (n=126)		
	Overall	Reading
Beginning	16 (12.7%)	34 (27.0%)
Early Intermediate	21 (16.7%)	37 (29.4%)
Intermediate	66 (52.4%)	45 (35.7%)
Early Advanced	20 (15.9%)	9 (07.1%)
Advanced	3 (02.4%)	1 (00.8%)
Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch		
	90 (62.9%)	
Parent Education		
Not a high school graduate	86 (58.9%)	
High school graduate	42 (28.8%)	
Some college (includes AA degree)	8 (05.5%)	
College graduate	1 (0.7%)	
Graduate school or post-graduate training	3 (02.1%)	
Declined to state or unknown	6 (04.2%)	

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The SES program was well attended. About 65% of the SES students attended at least 34 hours, and 28% of the students attended 37-39 hours (39 hours was the maximum possible). A total of 88 students (42.7%) attended 24-26 sessions. Only 16 students did not attend at least 21 hours of the SES program. These figures indicate that attendance at the SES program was excellent.

Figure 1: Number of Hours Attended, by Number of Students (n = 146)



As shown in Table 13, the average attendance at the SES program was 31.85 hours. Elementary students attended about four more hours than students in middle and high school, but attendance was consistently high, with a very narrow distribution of total hours among the 146 students.

Table 14 shows mean attendance by school site. Attendance hours were high at almost all of the elementary and middle school sites. Lower hours were posted at the high school programs.

Table 13: Mean Attendance, by Grade Level (n = 146)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Range</u>
All Grades	31.85	9.28	1.5 – 39
2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	33.67	7.33	1.5 – 39
6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	29.09	11.14	1.5 – 39

Table 14: Mean Attendance, by School Site (n = 146)

<u>Elementary Schools</u>	Mean # Hours
Davis Elementary	36.30
Walker Elementary	26.40
Monte Vista Elementary	34.00
Garfield Elementary	36.68
Hoover Elementary	34.25
Romero-Cruz Elementary	35.00
Adams Elementary	35.25
Diamond Elementary	32.00
Wilson Elementary	36.67
Lowell Elementary	34.08
Lincoln Elementary	30.56
Edison Elementary	35.50
Kennedy Elementary	33.75
Franklin Elementary	37.50
Carver Elementary	32.00
Jackson Elementary	1.50
Jefferson Elementary	32.67
Sepulveda Elementary	34.88
 <u>Middle Schools</u>	
Villa Fundamental Intermediate	35.79
Willard Intermediate	36.00
Carr Intermediate	31.10
Sierra Intermediate	33.88
Spurgeon Intermediate	28.27
McFadden Intermediate	35.70
Lathrop Intermediate	37.50
McArthur Fund. Intermediate	34.63
 <u>High Schools</u>	
Saddleback High	5.5
Valley High	21.21
Santa Ana High	27.00
Century High	24.17

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR # 4: **Positive Relations at the Program**

Two measures of student perceptions of the SES afterschool environment, Peer Affiliation and Staff & Activities, were collected on the post-participation survey. These two measures are related to HQSES Performance Indicator # 4, the number of positive, supportive relationships that students report having with adults and peers.

On the post survey, 121 students completed the two measures of program experiences: Staff & Activities and Peer Affiliation. Table 7 shows that the majority of the students had good to excellent experiences in the SES program. They enjoyed the activities, had positive relationships with program staff (3.29 on a 4 point scale, indicating good to excellent relationships), and got along with peers (3.14 on a 4-point scale, indicating good relationships with peers).

Table 15: Mean Scores of Students Program Experience

	Post-Participation	
	Mean	SD
Staff & Activities (n = 121)	3.29	0.65
Peer Affiliation (n = 121)	3.15	0.71

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR # 3: **Effects of SES Participation in 2010-11 on Changes in Student Academic Achievement**

The previous sections focused on student attendance and student perceptions of the quality SES afterschool environment. On these performance indicators, both attendance and program quality appeared to be excellent. Now we turn to performance indicator 3, changes in student academic performance in the SES attendees. We start with the students' performance on the 12-item THINK assessment administered by the SES tutors.

As shown in Table 16, students showed great improvement on the 12-item THINK assessment. Results of a matched pairs t-test confirmed that this improvement was statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ). Figure 2 presents these changes graphically for elementary and middle/high school students.

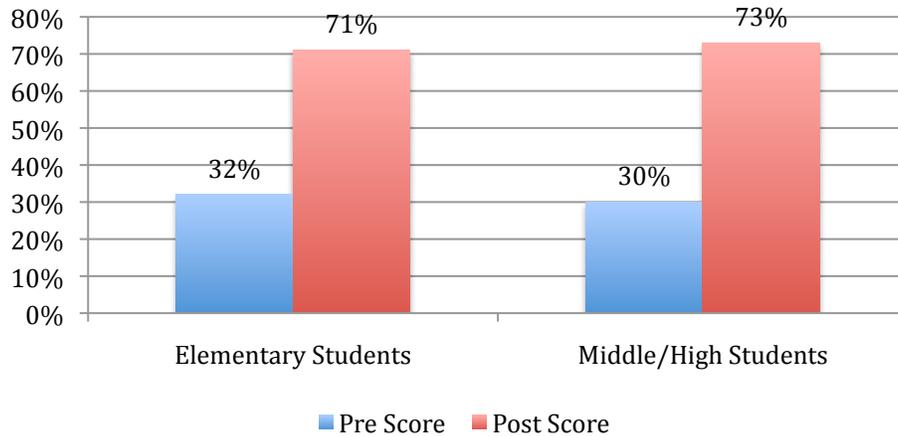
Table 16

THINK Assessment (n =128)	Pretest		Post test	Change		
	%	M		%	M	
All Students*	31%	0.11	72%	0.21	40%	0.23
Elementary Students*	32%	0.11	71%	0.21	39%	0.24
Mid/High Students*	30%	0.10	73%	0.20	43%	0.22

Note. % refers to the % of items that were correct

\* $p < .01$

Figure 2: Pre and Post Scores (% items correct), THINK Assessment (n =146)



Next, we turn to analyses that were conducted to test for changes in CST and CELDT scores from spring 2010 to spring 2011. For these analyses, all 2010 and 2011 scores for the following specific tests were acquired from the SAUSD database: CST English Language Arts, CST Math, CELDT Overall, CELDT Reading. Of the 146 SES students who attended the SES program, most of the students (n = 112-116) had test scores for both years.

Results of paired t-tests showed that students who attended SES in during 2010-11 posted significant gains in all test scores from spring 2010 to spring 2011. Table 9 shows the 2010 and 2011 mean test scores, and the mean change in scores from 2010 to 2011. All differences are statistically significant.

Table 17: CST and CELDT Test Scores for SES students in Spring 2010 and Spring 2011

	2010		2011		Change, 2010-2011	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
CST Language Arts** (n=112)	289.58	32.87	302.00	37.64	12.42	39.87
CST Math* (n=116)	314.80	48.72	326.97	55.36	12.16	55.16
CELDT Overall** (n=113)	476.32	65.52	499.91	63.77	23.59	42.64
CELDT Reading** (n=113)	459.03	83.21	488.91	75.37	29.89	69.72

\*\* p<.01

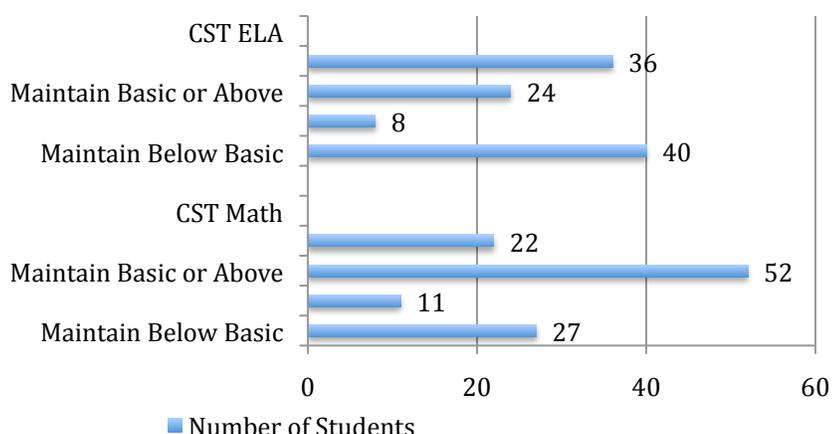
\* p<.05

### Effects of 2010-11 SES Participation on CST and CELDT Proficiency Level

Another way to examine these changes is to consider changes in proficiency levels on the CST ELA and the CST Math to determine how many SES students moved from the Below Basic level to the Basic level or above from 2010 to 2011. As shown in Figure 3, about 33% of students in the SES program (n = 36) improved from Below Basic to the Basic level or above in CST ELA scores, whereas only 7% of the SES students (n = 8) decreased from Basic to Below Basic. A total of 22% of students in the SES program (n = 24) maintained scores at the Basic level or above.

In CST Math scores, about 20% of SES students (n = 22) improved from Below Basic to Basic or above from Spring 2010 to Spring 2011, whereas 10% (n = 11) decreased from Basic or above to Below Basic during this period. About 46% of SES students (n = 52) maintained the Basic level or above in CST Math scores.

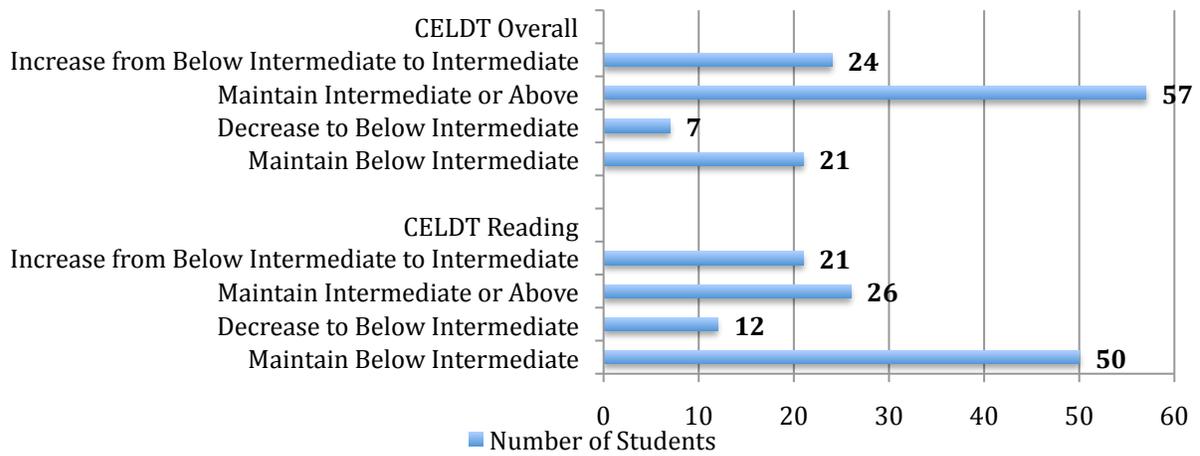
Figure 3: Changes in CST Proficiency Levels, 2010 to 2011



Changes in proficiency levels on the CELDT Overall and CELDT Reading tests were also examined. Results were similar to the results for CST scores. About 22% of students in the SES program (n = 24) improved from Below Intermediate to the Intermediate level or above in CELDT Overall scores, whereas the scores of only 7 students (6%) decreased from Intermediate to Below Intermediate. The majority of students in the SES program (n = 57, 52%) maintained scores at the Intermediate level or above.

In CELDT Reading scores, about 19% of SES students (n = 21) improved from Below Intermediate to Intermediate or above, whereas 11% (n = 12) decreased from Intermediate or above to Below Intermediate. About 24% of SES students (n = 26) maintained the Intermediate level or above in CELDT Reading scores.

Figure 4: Changes in CELDT Proficiency Levels, 2010 to 2011



Comparison of SES Attendees versus Students who Enrolled and Did Not Attend

Analyses were also conducted to examine the test scores of the students who were enrolled in SES, but did not attend any SES sessions. The test scores of the non-attending SES students were compared to the test scores of students who did attend SES. Students who attended SES had greater positive changes in test scores from 2010 to 2011. ANOVA results showed that the positive changes were significant for CST Math scores ( $p < .05$ ).

Table 18: CST and CELDT Test Scores, by SES 2010-11 Attendance

	2010		2011		Change, 2010-2011	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<b>CST Language Arts</b>						
Attended SES (n=112)	289.58	32.87	302.00	37.64	12.41	39.87
Enrolled only (n=33)	293.18	33.22	291.24	33.89	-1.94	31.79
<b>CST Math*</b>						
Attended SES (n=116)	314.80	48.72	326.97	55.36	12.16	55.16
Enrolled only (n=32)	312.06	46.16	301.41	41.10	-10.66	51.39
<b>CELDT Overall</b>						
Attended SES (n=113)	476.32	65.52	499.91	63.77	23.59	42.64
Enrolled only (n=31)	510.13	80.26	527.77	46.15	17.65	54.76
<b>CELDT Reading</b>						
Attended SES (n=113)	459.03	83.21	488.91	75.37	29.89	69.72
Enrolled only (n=31)	509.81	88.80	532.23	55.97	22.42	65.77

\*  $p < .05$

## FINDINGS: ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN THINK SESSIONS AND GAINS IN CST AND CELDT SCORES

This section of the report examines the effects of participation in SES and other THINK programs on changes in CST and CELDT scores (2010 to 2011). Four groups of THINK students were included in the analyses, based on the type of THINK programs attended. The comparison group was comprised of SAUSD students in the same grades and at the same schools as the THINK students, but who did not participate in the THINK programs. All students who met these criteria, and for whom 2010 *and* 2011 test scores were available (CST ELA, CST Math, CELDT Overall, CELDT Reading), were included in the analyses.

### *Student Groups*

The four groups of THINK students, and the SAUSD comparison group are:

1. Students who attended *only* the THINK afterschool program
2. Students who attended *only* the Supplemental THINK program
3. Students who attended *both* THINK afterschool and Supplemental programs
4. Students who attended SES tutoring, *plus* THINK afterschool *or* Supplemental programs
5. SAUSD students who did not attend any THINK program in 2010-2011

Three types of THINK 2010-11 participation are included in the analyses: attendance at the regular THINK afterschool program sessions, participation at Supplemental program sessions, and participations at the SES Tutoring sessions. (Note: although SES sessions varied in the amount of time per session, in order to compare SES with the other THINK programs, for these analyses all attendance was recorded as sessions/days). Any student who attended at least one session of any of these programs, and had at least one set of test scores for 2010 *and* 2011, was included in the analyses as a THINK student (n=14,548).

The comparison group for all the analyses was comprised of SAUSD students who did not attend any THINK 2010-11 program, who were in the same grades as the students in the THINK programs, who attended schools that offered THINK programs during 2010-11, and who had at least one set of test scores for 2010 *and* 2011 (n = 19,226). The total sample included 33,774 students; the total number of students included in each analysis varied according to how many test scores were available for each of the four tests.

Table 19 shows that students in all of the THINK programs often had lower 2010 CELDT test scores than the students in the SAUSD comparison group, which is consistent with the high proportion of English Language Learners who attend THINK programs.

ANOVAs were conducted to compare the Change Scores of each THINK group to the Change Scores of the comparison SAUSD group. Results show that the THINK program groups had significantly greater gains in scores when compared with the students in the SAUSD comparison group. Of all the groups of THINK students, students who attended the SES 10-11 program, *plus* at least one THINK *or* Supplemental session, showed the greatest increase in CST scores from spring 2010 to spring 2011.

Table 19: Changes in CST and CELDT Scores, THINK 10-11 and SAUSD Comparison Group

	2010		2011		Change, 2010-11	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
<b><u>CST ELA</u></b>						
SAUSD Comparison (n=16,297)	336.79	52.83	336.96	53.74	<b>0.17</b>	38.01
THINK <i>only</i> (n=5,747)**	337.67	51.07	338.02	52.14	<b>0.35</b>	38.19
Supplemental <i>only</i> (n=2,189)**	336.55	48.60	340.22	49.43	<b>3.67</b>	39.02
THINK <i>and</i> Supplemental (n=4,068)*	337.51	50.13	338.47	50.03	<b>0.96</b>	39.25
SES plus THINK <i>or</i> Supp. (n=87)**	287.43	32.49	301.05	36.11	<b>13.62</b>	39.83
<b><u>CST Math</u></b>						
SAUSD Comparison (n=16,383)	348.11	77.37	342.93	80.81	<b>-2.26</b>	58.90
THINK <i>only</i> (n=5,801)**	363.39	75.19	361.13	73.79	<b>-5.18</b>	58.57
Supplemental <i>only</i> (n=2,201)**	364.64	75.96	374.36	75.84	<b>9.72</b>	59.87
THINK <i>and</i> Supplemental (n=4,103)**	366.06	72.94	370.86	74.85	<b>4.80</b>	60.54
SES plus THINK <i>or</i> Supp. (n=90)**	317.76	46.60	334.01	56.14	<b>16.26</b>	54.38
<b><u>CELDT Overall</u></b>						
SAUSD Comparison (n=11,861)	506.98	77.31	527.67	70.28	<b>20.70</b>	46.49
THINK <i>only</i> (n=4,370)**	493.03	70.29	519.31	61.78	<b>26.28</b>	46.44
Supplemental <i>only</i> (n=2,107)**	481.58	64.91	511.86	57.76	<b>30.28</b>	43.62
THINK <i>and</i> Supplemental (n=3,366)**	488.75	69.06	517.47	59.65	<b>28.72</b>	44.54
SES plus THINK <i>or</i> Supp. (n=89)**	466.80	58.69	493.08	59.07	<b>26.28</b>	44.80
<b><u>CELDT Read</u></b>						
SAUSD Comparison (n=11,848)	502.61	86.78	526.95	82.33	<b>24.33</b>	65.51
THINK <i>only</i> (n=4,367)**	482.58	81.96	512.00	77.02	<b>29.42</b>	68.01
Supplemental <i>only</i> (n=2,101)**	468.50	79.89	507.37	72.36	<b>38.87</b>	61.84
THINK <i>and</i> Supplemental (n=3,365)**	477.77	82.16	511.61	75.34	<b>33.85</b>	63.74
SES plus THINK <i>or</i> Supp. (n=89)**	447.58	75.63	480.52	70.93	<b>32.93</b>	69.56

\*\*p<.01

\* p<.05

Next, regression analyses were conducted to test for the effects of THINK attendance (total sessions of each type of THINK program) on changes in test scores. All of the analyses include student-level factors (control variables), continuous THINK attendance variables (predictor variables), and continuous scaled CST and CELDT test scores (outcome variables). Changes in test scores were used as the outcome variable (2011 scores minus 2010 scores). To allow for comparison across outcomes with different scales, both types of coefficients are reported (unstandardized = B, standardized = Beta).

The following five control variables served to account for any differences in outcome scores due to gender, school level, ELL status, FRL status, and Engagement. These variables were used in all of the regression analyses:

- **Gender**
- **School Level**—The low number of students in middle or high school precluded the possibility of running analyses by grade level, or running separate analyses for elementary students and middle/high students. Differences in outcomes by grade level were accounted for by the school level variable, which divided students into two categories: elementary students and middle/high school students.
- **ELL Status**—The majority of students in the SES program were identified as English Language Learners. This variable had two levels: students classified as English Language Learners (ELL), vs. students classified as fully English proficient (FEP), reclassified English proficient (RFEP), or speakers of English only (EO).
- **FRL Status**—This variable was used as an indicator of socio-economic status. It identified students who were eligible for free or reduced lunch (FRL) vs. students who were not eligible.

THINK Attendance variables were comprised of the total number of sessions of each program attended (regular THINK program, Supplemental program, or SES tutoring program), and also of the total number 2010-2011 sessions of all programs combined. Non-THINK students were scored as 0. By examining the effects of the continuous variables, analyses can show the relationship between actual number of sessions attended in THINK programs and any changes in CELDT and CST scores. For these analyses, total number of THINK sessions (all programs combined) ranged from 0 to 209.

Table 19 shows the results for the effects of THINK attendance sessions on changes in the four types of test scores from 2010 to 2011: CST ELA, CST Math, CELDT Overall, and CELDT Reading.

As shown in Table 20, students who attended more THINK supplemental sessions had greater positive changes in CST reading, SCT math, CELDT Total, and CELDT Reading than students who attended fewer THINK supplemental sessions. Students who attended greater numbers of SES sessions had greater positive changes in CST ELA and CST Math scores than students who attended fewer SES sessions. Students who attended greater numbers of THINK afterschool sessions had greater positive changes in CST Math and CELDT Overall scores than students who attended fewer THINK afterschool program.

Table 20: Effects of THINK 2010-11 Attendance Sessions on Changes in Test Scores

	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	<u>Beta</u>	<u>p</u>
<u>CST ELA</u>				
Total ALL Sessions, With 0s (n=33,282)	–	–	–	NS
THINK Sessions, With 0s (n=33,282)	–	–	–	NS
Supplemental Sessions, With 0s (n=33,282)	0.23	0.11	.013	.037
SES Sessions, With 0s (n=33,282)	0.50	0.17	.018	.003
<u>CST Math</u>				
Total ALL Sessions, With 0s (n=33,277)	0.02	0.01	.019	.002
THINK Sessions, With 0s (n=33,277)	0.02	0.01	.017	.005
Supplemental Sessions, With 0s (n=33,277)	1.29	0.17	.046	.000
SES Sessions, With 0s (n=33,277)	0.50	0.25	.012	.044
<u>CELDT Overall</u>				
Total ALL Sessions, With 0s (n=21,817)	.013	.005	.017	.017
THINK Sessions, With 0s (n=21,817)	.013	.006	.016	.021
Supplemental Sessions, With 0s (n=21,817)	.387	.134	.020	.004
SES Sessions, With 0s (n=21,817)	–	–	–	NS
<u>CELDT Reading</u>				
Total ALL Sessions, With 0s (n=21,794)	–	–	–	NS
THINK Sessions, With 0s (n=21,794)	–	–	–	NS
Supplemental Sessions, With 0s (n=21,794)	.445	.189	.016	.019
SES Sessions, With 0s (n=21,794)	–	–	–	NS

## SECTION III—SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

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This section summarizes both the qualitative and quantitative findings of the High Quality Supplemental Educational Services and Afterschool Partnerships Demonstration Project three-year evaluation carried out by the University of California, Irvine. Key replicable and scalable strategies, as well as identified challenges, barriers and recommendations based on qualitative findings are presented first, followed by key quantitative findings.

### KEY QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

#### Findings Related to Replicable and Scalable Strategies from HQSES Implementation Experience, 2010-11

This first set of findings, based on extensive qualitative data data collected during the 2010-11 study year—including interviews and surveys with stakeholders (staff, parents, principals and program administrators) and program observations—show evidence of THINK Together’s progress over three years of developing and refining its *aligned delivery* approach to implementing high quality SES and afterschool program services in partnership with SAUSD.

The various components of program management and delivery necessarily relate to three of the four Performance Indicators (PI) for the HQSES demonstration project:

- PI-1: *Effectiveness of the management structure as it relates to the programmatic and staffing logistics of enrolling and recruiting students into the blended THINK SES model.*
- PI-2: *Effectiveness of the retention strategies used by THINK SES staff*
- PI-4: *Increase in the number of positive, supportive relationships that students have with adults and peers.*

The key qualitative findings are therefore presented with the corresponding Performance Indicator indicated in brackets after each strategy, challenge or barrier listed and are organized as follows: (a) Program Management and Aligned Delivery; (b) Staff Development; (c) Indicators of SES and ASP Quality; and (d) Stakeholder Satisfaction with the programs.

#### ***Recruitment and Retention***

- ◆ Building a long standing presence in the community by establishing visibility at the annual SES information fairs that take place at school sites throughout the District each fall has served to create an awareness among parents and the general school community that THINK not only provides quality afterschool programming but is also a leader in the provision of quality SES services in SAUSD and other districts as well. [PI-1; PI-2]
- ◆ Word of mouth from parents and teachers plays an important role in disseminating the quality of programming offered by THINK for both its SES and afterschool programs. In interviews and surveys parents state that they choose THINK because they heard from other parents and teachers that it is a good program. Parents also state that they

recommend THINK to other parents and that they would choose THINK again if their child is eligible for SES. [PI-2]

- ◆ Intentional efforts by SES program managers to outreach to parents and to principals, keeping them informed of their students' progress (e.g. monthly reports), and developments in the SES program (e.g. courtesy letters and parent appreciation meetings) foster support for the program at the school site level and in the community. [PI-1; PI-2]
- ◆ Informing site coordinators of the SES program features and application process ensures that they can communicate to parents in the afterschool program about the opportunity of SES services for their children in an informed manner. Although THINK staff cannot advocate for parents to choose THINK as their provider—parents are made aware that SES is part of the menu of services that THINK provides. [PI-1; PI-2]
- ◆ Parents, whose children are enrolled in the THINK afterschool program, most often state as their primary motivation for choosing THINK as their SES provider both the convenience and sense of security of having their child at the school site under the supervision of the an established organization in the community, hence receiving the benefits of both programs without having to pick them up and transport them to another location or worry where they go at the end of their SES session. Parents are secure in knowing that their child is under THINK staff supervision throughout the afternoon and return to the afterschool program after their SES session. [PI-1; PI-2]

#### Identified Barriers and Challenges:

- Staff are not allowed to provide parents assistance in completing SES applications, even though parents often state that they feel more confident in asking questions and seeking advice from ASP staff who are readily available in the afterschool hours and with whom they have more direct contact on a daily basis when picking up their children from the program. Staff also state they feel frustrated that they cannot answer questions parents pose and instead are directed to tell them to seek information from the main office where parents are not as apt to go. [PI-1; PI-2]
- Although some parents say they indicate THINK as their first choice on the application they are assigned another provider. [PI-1; PI-2]
- Parents complain that they choose a particular subject area for their child to receive SES tutoring in but are assigned the other option (e.g. ELA instead of Math). [PI-1; PI-2]

#### ***Aligned Delivery Approach***

- ◆ The development and refinement of academic support curricula and instructional strategies that can be implemented by SES tutors and ASP staff across both programs fosters a sense of coherence of purpose and approach for THINK Together staff, while providing access to quality academic enrichment for a larger number of students [beyond those eligible and selected for SES services]. [PI-1]

- ✦ Allowing SES instructors flexibility in planning each tutoring session, to address specific and evolving needs of students they directly tutor, makes the SES tutoring more individualized and engaging for students. [PI-1; PI-2]
- ✦ Giving site coordinators a central role in the oversight of SES instructors, coordinating with school site principals and communicating with parents about the range of services THINK can provide [i.e. SES, ASP, Supplemental and Summer Learning] works to advance a seamless program model and improve the quality of services provided, strengthening partnerships with these key stakeholders. [PI-1; PI-2]
- ✦ Building a shared identity between site coordinators and SES instructors about the vision and mission of the program; i.e. SES management makes effort to keep all stakeholders involved and informed on every level. [PI-1]
- ✦ Promoting shared youth development principals—i.e., caring, supportive, encouraging interactions between adults and youth, co-constructed agreements and high expectations consistently communicated, opportunities for youth choice, voice and leadership—provide students with highly positive experiences with adults and peers across the afterschool day. [PI-4]

Identified Barriers/Challenges and Recommendations:

- Ensuring that all site coordinators and administrative THINK staff across the organization have a shared understanding of the goals of the *Aligned Delivery* approach and work to effectively coordinate between the SES and ASP. [PI-1]
- Facilitating the integration of SES tutors with ASP staff by building communication and community across programs, including; (a) more opportunities for sharing effective academic tutoring and enrichment curriculum and instructional strategies between both programs; (b) facilitating lines of communication between SES and ASP program management. [PI-1; PI-4]
- Providing SES tutors, ASP site coordinators and staff with sufficient range of curriculum resources and accompanying staff development opportunities to ensure staff competency in implementation of tutoring and academic enrichment activities and high levels of student engagement, cognitive challenge and mastery. [PI-1; PI-2]

***Staff Development***

- ✦ Promoting shared *youth development principles* among staff in both SES and ASP through intentional training and practices to build staff competencies in guiding student active learning and leadership skill development. [PI-4]
- ✦ Creating opportunities for SES instructors to share effective tutoring practices during weekly Friday planning sessions builds a professional learning community that positively impacts the quality of tutoring services offered. [PI-1; PI-2]

- ✦ Providing SES instructors with expert training in effective tutoring strategies and onsite mentoring and modeling of tutoring and academic enrichment curriculum delivery builds sense of competency and effectiveness. [PI-1; PI-2]
- ✦ Making available a range of curriculum resources and opportunities for the exchange of curricular ideas and instructional strategies aides SES instructors in delivering more engaging and effective tutoring sessions. [PI-2]

Identified Barriers/Challenges and Recommendations:

- SES instructors and ASP site coordinators express the desire for more opportunities for expert training in curriculum implementation and more clear and concise information on effective instructional strategies for facilitating hands-on learning opportunities for students in both programs. [PI-1]
- SES instructors and ASP site coordinators communicate that limited resources exist in terms of time and materials to plan and offer activities that remain engaging and challenging for students, particularly those who have been attending the ASP for more than one year and have experienced some of the Kidz Lit and Math Blast and Science activities before. SES instructors noted a need for materials that are appropriate to the tutoring session structure and time frame and want activities that are hands-on and engaging enough for students to want to keep attending their sessions. [PI-1]

***Indicators of SES and ASP Program Quality***

- ✦ Mean ratings of 85 structured observations of the SES and ASP using the Promising Practice Ratings System<sup>2</sup> documented the prevalence of positive practice indicators in support of the HQSES project goals—(1) supportive relations with adults; (2) supportive relations with peers; (3) student engagement in activities; (4) opportunities for cognitive growth; (5) appropriate program structure; (6) opportunities for autonomy; (7) setting chaos; (8) staff over-control; (9) mastery orientation. [Program activities were rated on a four point scale with “4” being evidence of many positive indicators and “1” indicating no positive indicators were evident]. [PI-1; PI-4]
- ✦ Ratings were high for both SES and Afterschool Program activity observations and improved in some areas from Year Two to Year Three. Overall program observations showed that SES instructors and ASP staff were able to create well-organized and appropriately-structured activities that were engaging to students, challenged them to solve problems, engage in group discussions, work collaboratively, and lead activities and master academic skills/knowledge and competencies in a range of activities and subject areas. [PI-1; PI-2]

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<sup>2</sup> The Promising Practices Rating System was developed for use in the Study of Promising After-School Programs, a national study of high-quality programs serving economically disadvantaged children and youth (Vandell et al., 2006).

- ✦ Moreover, strong evidence of continued performance in *building positive relationships with adults and their peers* was documented across the three-year study, with the highest ratings on the PPRS 4 point scale achieved in this area: the mean scores for the Supportive Relationships with Adults in the ASP was 3.39 and in the SES program 3.94. Mean scores for Supportive Relationships with Peers in the ASP were 3.48 and 3.84 for the ASP and SES program respectively [PI-4].

Identified Barriers/Challenges and Recommendations:

- Lowest ratings in the ASP persisted in the areas of “Cognitive Challenge” and “Mastery Orientation”, more staff development and curriculum options that focus on developing and implementing focused and intentional activities with clear skill development objectives may help to address these areas as identified in SC interviews. [PI-1]

***Stakeholder Satisfaction with Program***

- ✦ SES administration made specific strides in keeping all stakeholders informed of the SES program: e.g., through regular communication of student progress via monthly reports and an end-of-the-year progress report showing the pre- and post-assessment scores for each student; informing principals of field trip incentive; and holding a reception for parents and students completing the SES program. [PI-1; PI-2]
- ✦ In surveys and interviews (as part of the HQSES evaluation study), parents, school principals, SES instructors, and site coordinators expressed satisfaction with the general quality of the SES and ASP programs. [PI-1]
- ✦ Overall, survey results show that parents were satisfied with the SES program, and believed that the program was a positive experience for their child. [PI-1; PI-4]
- ✦ Principals and parents recognized the benefit of the HQSES blended program approach when asked how they believed their students might benefit from receiving a comprehensive set of program services combining both the ASP enrichment experiences and the SES intentional focused academic support. [PI-2]

Identified Barriers/Challenges and Recommendations:

When asked if THINK Together can improve the SES services it provides at their school site, principals and parents offered the following feedback and suggestions:

- Increase the time span and number of hours of SES services to increase the benefit for participating students. [PI-2]
- Smaller groups or more one-on-one tutoring to more effectively address student’s individual academic needs. [PI-1; PI-4]

- Increase principal buy-in and program effectiveness through greater communication with principals and teachers about the SES program by providing information about the curriculum, the criteria for the selection of tutors, student assessments used, and by establishing ways teachers can provide SES instructors with information about students relevant academic challenges and instructional support needs. [PI-2]

## **KEY QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS**

### **Key Findings related to the SES Program, 2010-2011**

- ◆ Attendance at THINK SES program was excellent. Of 146 students who attended, 65% attended at least 34 hours of a possible 39 hours. The average attendance was 31.85 hours.
- ◆ SES attendees reported positive program experiences related to both Staff and Activities and Relationships with Peers in the THINK SES Program.
- ◆ Statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ) pretest- posttest gains were obtained for the THINK SES student on the THINK Assessment of Student Skills
- ◆ Statistically significant improvements ( $p < .05$ ) were found for THINK SES students from 2010 to 2011 for CST Math, CST ELA, CELDT Overall, and CELDT Reading standardized test scores.
- ◆ Students who attended the THINK SES program had significant gains in test scores, whereas non-attenders declined in performance from 2010 to 2011.

### **Key Findings Pertaining to All THINK Programs, 2010-2011**

- ◆ Students who attended THINK programs had significantly greater increases in CST and CELDT scores than students in the SAUSD comparison group. Students who attended the SES 10-11 program, *plus* at least one THINK *or* Supplemental session, showed the greatest increase in CST scores
- ◆ Students who attended more supplemental sessions posted greater changes in test scores than students with fewer supplemental sessions. Students who attended more THINK afterschool sessions posted greater changes in CST Math scores and CELDT Overall scores than students with fewer sessions. A greater number of SES sessions was associated with greater changes in CST ELA and CST Math scores.

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## **APPENDICES**

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**Appendix A: Study Measures**

**Appendix B: Program Artifacts**

**Appendix C: Summary Tables of PPRS Observation Ratings and Comments**



## **Appendix A: Study Measures**



## **Appendix B: Program Artifacts**



**Appendix C: Summary Tables of PPRS Observation Ratings and Comments**

