



WALK is an alternative education program in Charlottesville High School that provides online credit recovery assistance to students who have failed a class and are ***at-risk for not graduating***



Maya is a senior at CHS. She likes the WALK program and appreciates having a quiet space where she can work at her own pace. Maya feels that traditional classrooms move too quickly and her teachers don't slow down to help. She says the main difference between the WALK staff and other CHS faculty is that "THEY CARE."



Aaron is a senior at CHS. He has moved 5 times during his high school career and drives from Waynesboro (or farther) to class every day. Aaron joined the WALK program when he transferred to CHS. Aaron, while brilliant, argues that he hates school and is mainly interested in sports at CHS. Aaron has expressed a budding interest in college, but has internally ruled it out as an option for himself.

The Students



James is a former WALK student who graduated in 2018. During his time at CHS, James says he mainly struggled with school because of "stuff going on at home." He also attributed his poor performance at school to a problem with himself as a person. James felt like the responsibility was on him to succeed. He currently struggles with finding direction after graduation.



Erica is a former WALK student who graduated in 2014. She has faced challenges of losing a parent, living with epilepsy, and dropping out of college. At CHS, learning was hard for Erica because she didn't feel comfortable working with students who understood things better than she did. She was skeptical of online learning, but grew to like it with the help of the WALK staff's understanding and caring attitudes.



WALK
CLASS OF '14 | 37 seniors

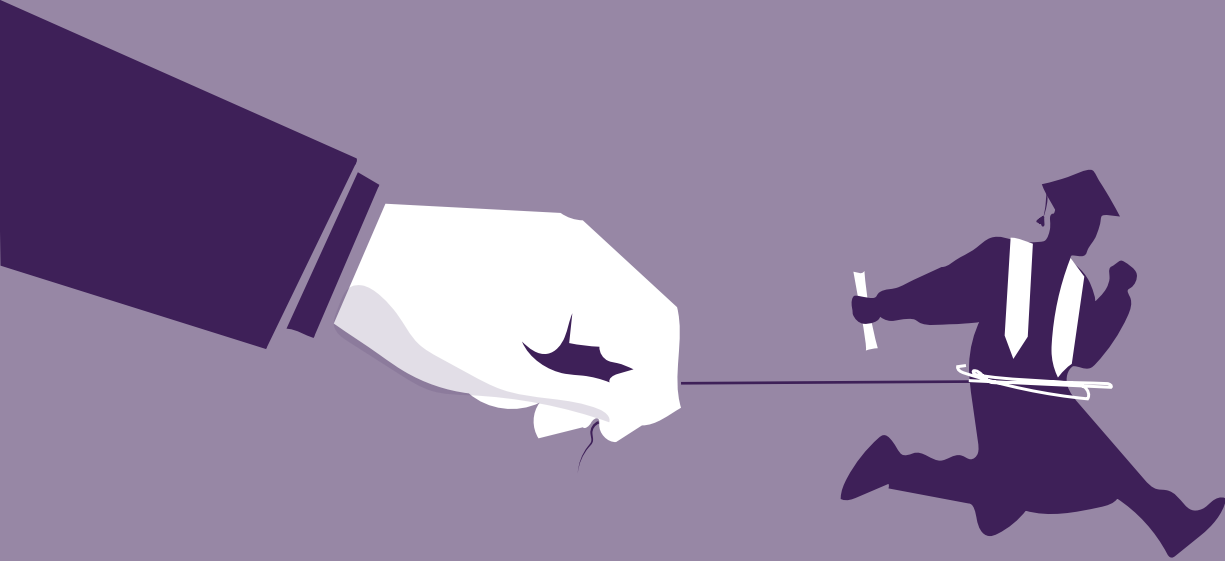


DID NOT GRADUATE | GRADUATED

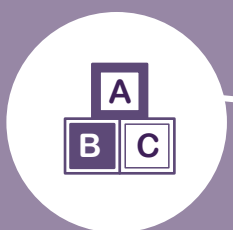
It's really hard to focus on math when...

Homeless HUNGRY
Mom's in jail searching for drunk parent at 3 AM on a school night
working two jobs outside of school nobody cares
people give up on you

- Victoria Alvarez
- Blaise Sevier
- Jiayi Lu
- Wesley Kittelberger
- Rachel Delaney
- Makayla Whitehurst
- Madison Nguyen



What's holding them back?



Academics
perceived value
lack of help



Adversity
SES
family supports
unmet needs
poor coping skills



Motivation
aspiration



Access
resources
opportunities
exposure to success



too fast paced

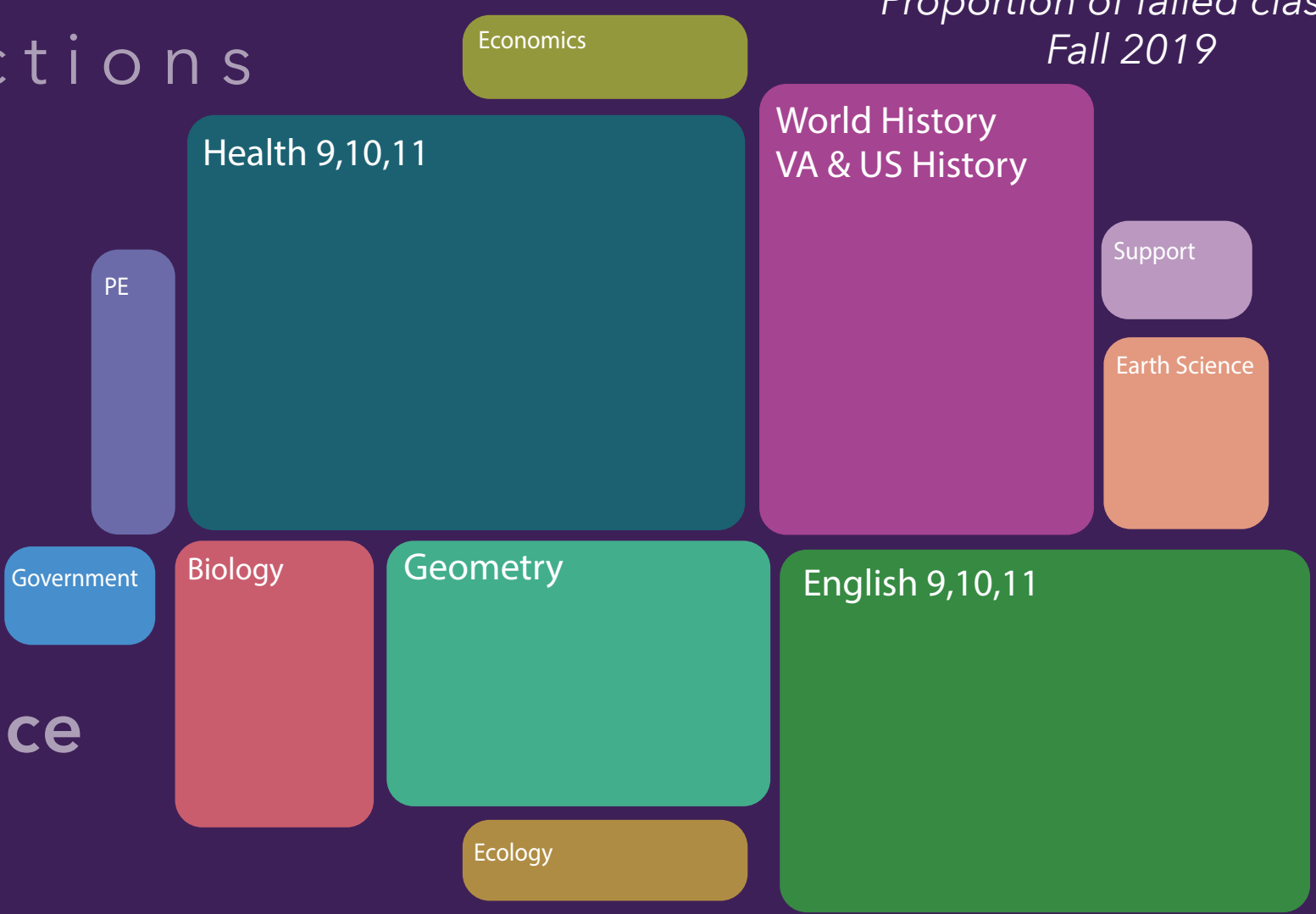
my teachers won't slow down to help

distractions

Proportion of failed classes
Fall 2019

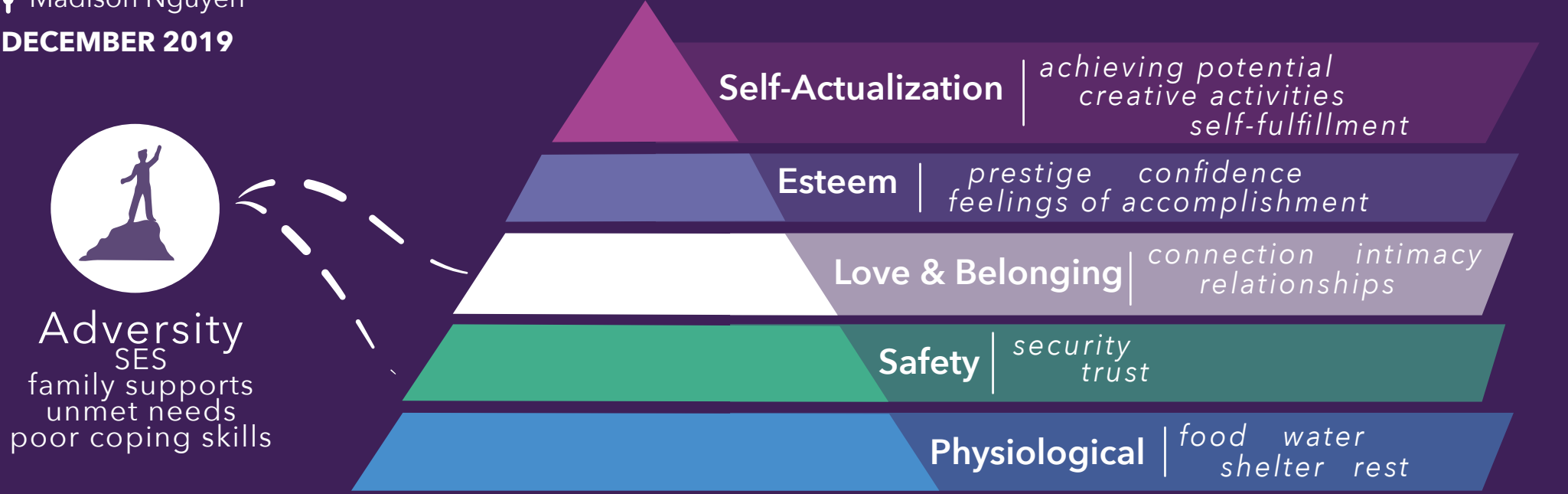
personal
attention
from
teachers

attendance



Maslow's Hierarchy^{3 4}

For WALK students, it's hard to focus on learning when basic human needs are not being met and other priorities get in the way.



Possible Selves⁵

WALK students have trouble envisioning what their lives could look like after high school. They lack the resources and social capital needed to help explore meaningful paths for success.



Expectancy-Value Theory⁶

WALK students struggle with motivation for learning and have developed a poor relationship with school. Negative past experiences, internalized ideas about ability, and limited exposure to instruction beyond a computer screen make it difficult for students to perceive the value of learning.



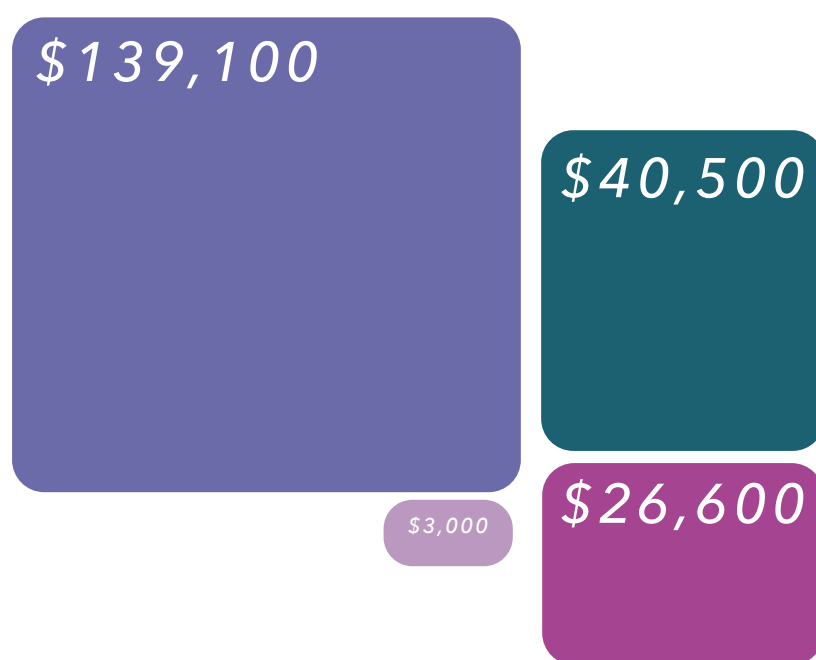
Why should we care?

Outcomes for high school dropouts:



For every recovered or prevented high school dropout, the **average societal return** is:¹

- Tax payments
- Public healthcare
- Reduced criminal activity
- Public welfare



RE

IMAGINING WALK: OUR INNOVATION

Based on our research, we identify **MOTIVATION** as the overarching barrier to learning that WALK students face. Our aim is to increase motivation by supporting these students in 1) **fulfilling basic needs** 2) **transforming their relationship with learning** and 3) **envisioning successful futures for themselves after graduation**.



Create a design plan for a new WALK learning space to provide:

Physiological need amenities

Project-based learning

Workplace & life skills training

Mental health services



Create a handbook to guide WALK efforts in:

Effective use of the space

Evidence-based practices

Exploration programming

Advocating for students

Victoria Alvarez
Blaise Sevier
Jiayi Lu
Wesley Kittelberger
Rachel Delaney
Makayla Whitehurst
Madison Nguyen

DECEMBER 2019

References

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Victoria Alvarez ●
Blaise Sevier ●
Jiayi Lu ●
Wesley Kittelberger ●
Rachel Delaney ●
Makayla Whitehurst ●
Madison Nguyen ●