



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF GREATER HOUSTON

Texas Afterschool Centers on Education™ Evaluation Analysis Report

2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

MEADOWS
MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY INSTITUTE

Contents

Executive Summary	i
Introduction and Background.....	1
Descriptive Statistics on Club Members.....	2
Members and Attendance	2
Members by School Grade Level	4
Club-Level Data	15
Staff Interview Findings	18
Strengths	19
Challenges	20
Results and Implications	20
Major Findings	20
Research Limitations.....	22
Conclusions and Recommendations	22
Appendix One: Member-Level Data Cleaning Notes	24
Appendix Two: Additional Member-Level Details	25
Appendix Three: Additional Club-Level Details	26

List of Tables

Table 1. Number of Members by Grade Level and Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	4
Table 2. Program Attendance Days by Club (Spring 2021)	5
Table 3. Average Core GPA Over Fall Terms (2018 to 2020)	7
Table 4. Percentage of Core Classes Passed by Members (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021).....	9
Table 5. Average Number of Member School Absences Per Term by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	10
Table 6. Regular Attendance of 45 Days or More by Club (Spring 2021)	13
Table 7. Average GPA by Regular Attendance (Spring 2021)	13

List of Figures

Figure 1. Members Who Attended At Least One Day of BGCGH Texas ACE™ (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	3
Figure 2. Attendance Trends by Club in the Fall Term (2018 to 2020)	4
Figure 3. Core Classes GPA for Members (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	6
Figure 4. Trend in Overall Average Core Classes GPA by Club in the Fall Term (2018 to 2020).....	7
Figure 5. Average Core Course Grades by Term (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	8
Figure 6. Core Course Grades Across Both Terms and All Clubs (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	9
Figure 7. Average Number of Classes Passed in the Fall Term (2018 to 2020)	10
Figure 8. Trend in Average Number of School Day Absences by Club in the Fall Term (2018 to 2020).....	11
Figure 9. Average Core GPA by Regular Attendance (Spring 2021)	14
Figure 10. School Days Absent by Regular Attendance (Spring 2021)	15
Figure 11. NYOI Club Experience Indicator Measures (Fall 2020)	17
Figure 12. Change in NYOI Club Experience Indicator Measures (Fall 2019 to Fall 2020)	18
Figure 13. Mean GPA by Core Course and Grade Level (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021).....	25
Figure 14. Overall Member Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	26
Figure 15. Reading Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	27
Figure 16. Math Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	27
Figure 17. Science Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	28
Figure 18. Social Studies Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)	28

Executive Summary

The continued and novel challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have shaped the goals, outcomes, and approaches for all youth-serving organizations. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston (BGCGH) is no exception; the pandemic altered programming for the 2020–2021 academic year as it did in the previous academic year. Given the recent mental, physical, and emotional strain on children, youth, and families, youth-serving organizations are even more essential now. As we begin to evaluate the effects of the pandemic, a focused look at programming offered during the most recent school year (2020–2021) is valuable to see how BGCGH and the youth members it serves were able to navigate the difficulties of this moment in time.

At the request of BGCGH, The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (the Meadows Institute) conducted an evaluation analysis of the BGCGH Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas ACE™) program in its third year in the Spring Branch Independent School District (SBISD). BGCGH Texas ACE™ is designed to provide high-quality academic enrichment opportunities for children during non-school hours. The full report that follows details the Meadows Institute's evaluation findings on BGCGH's Texas ACE™ programming for the 2020–2021 school year and reviews staff perspectives on the organization's transition to alternate programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To inform this evaluation analysis, we drew from multiple data sources. First, we reviewed member and club data from the fall 2020 and spring 2021 academic terms as well as past data. The quantitative data included information on individual club members for both academic terms and aggregated (summary) information for each of the five clubs in the fall term only. Major findings on club members include:

- There has been high program attendance across the five BGCGH Texas ACE™ clubs.
- There was no significant difference in academic performance or number of absences between club members who regularly attended the ACE™ program and those who did not regularly attend.
- There was a notable increase in the number of absences per member per term during the 2020–2021 school year.
- There was an increase in member satisfaction across most club experience measures, including members' sense of belonging, their connections with BGCGH staff and school faculty, and their emotional safety.

To complement and enhance these findings and understand how staff responded and pivoted in their approaches to serving members, we also conducted interviews with BGCGH staff. The goal was to understand their experiences and the impacts of the pandemic specifically related to the transitions in BGCGH clubs and services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff

interviewed reiterated several key themes, including successes and challenges associated with continuing to serve children, youth, and families. To summarize, BGCGH staff were able to maintain strong connections with the club members and school faculty throughout the school year. Staff were committed and engaged in continuing to serve and support members during the pandemic, though identified ongoing stressors that required creative approaches.

In the full report, we offer detailed findings as well as recommendations to improve the BGCGH Texas ACE™ program, increase staff support, and enhance data collection and evaluation efforts. Above all, we recommend that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) continue to support BGCGH Texas ACE™ and the meaningful work happening in SBISD communities.

Acknowledgements

This report is made possible by the support of BGCGH and the staff involved in providing information for this evaluation. We are grateful to Texas ACE™ Project Director, Dexter Lockett, who coordinated with us for this evaluation analysis and prioritized providing exceptional services for club members despite challenges; to BGCGH Impact and Data Quality Manager, Britney Harris, who provided support to us in accessing the data for this analysis; and to the several staff members who gave their time and insights as part of the interviews. BGCGH Texas ACE™ and this evaluation are funded by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

Introduction and Background

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston (BGCGH) was awarded Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas ACE™) grant funding to provide high-quality academic enrichment opportunities for children and youth during non-school hours. BGCGH partnered with Spring Branch Independent School District (SBISD) to provide after school programming with this funding. During the 2020–2021 academic year, BGCGH Texas ACE™ operated at five clubs in SBISD: Spring Branch Elementary School, Spring Oaks Middle School, Westwood Elementary School, Woodview Elementary School, and The Women’s Home, a housing and support program that serves students from Treasure Forest Elementary School. Note that student service recipients are referred to as *members* throughout the remainder of this report to match standard BGCGH terminology.

BGCGH requested an evaluation analysis from the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (the Meadows Institute) to describe services provided and students served through its Texas ACE™ program during the 2020–2021 academic year. Additionally, BGCGH sought to understand the quantity and quality of these services, how of the services may support members’ academic performance, and how BGCGH can contextualize lessons learned from its response to the COVID-19 pandemic and turn them into actionable insights to inform future strategies.

BGCGH provided the Meadows Institute with two sources of quantitative data to inform our analyses in this report. The first were academic performance records from SBISD for each member who attended at least one day of BGCGH Texas ACE™ programming during the year. We then matched these academic performance records with BGCGH’s club attendance records. The second source of quantitative data was from the Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI)¹. Four of the five clubs provided NYOI data, with the exception of Woodview Elementary. To understand the potential effects of Texas ACE™ programming on club members over time, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on members, we compared academic performance data from the fall 2020 term with data from the 2019 and 2018 fall terms. We made a similar comparison of the NYOI results with data from the fall 2019 term prior to the pandemic. Finally, to complement and add depth to the quantitative data, we also collected qualitative data directly from BGCGH staff involved in Texas ACE™ programming through interviews on their experiences in the 2020–2021 school year.

¹ For more about NYOI and how it measures Boys and Girls Club experiences, see:
<https://clubexperience.blog/2018/02/22/how-do-we-measure-the-club-experience/>

Descriptive Statistics on Club Members

BGCGH Texas ACE™ serves over 1,000 student members from kindergarten to 8th grade. This section provides statistics on their program attendance, academic performance, and a comparison between members attending 45 days or more of BGCGH Texas ACE™ programming and those who attended less than 45 days of programming. Data described in this section come from SBISD's academic performance records for each student who attended at least one day of BGCGH Texas ACE™ programming during the fall 2020 or spring 2021 terms. Each of the clubs individually provided these data with one record (row) for each unique club member in a de-identified form. We also used club attendance data from the 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 reports on BGCGH Texas ACE™ programming as a benchmark for fall 2020 attendance.

Members and Attendance

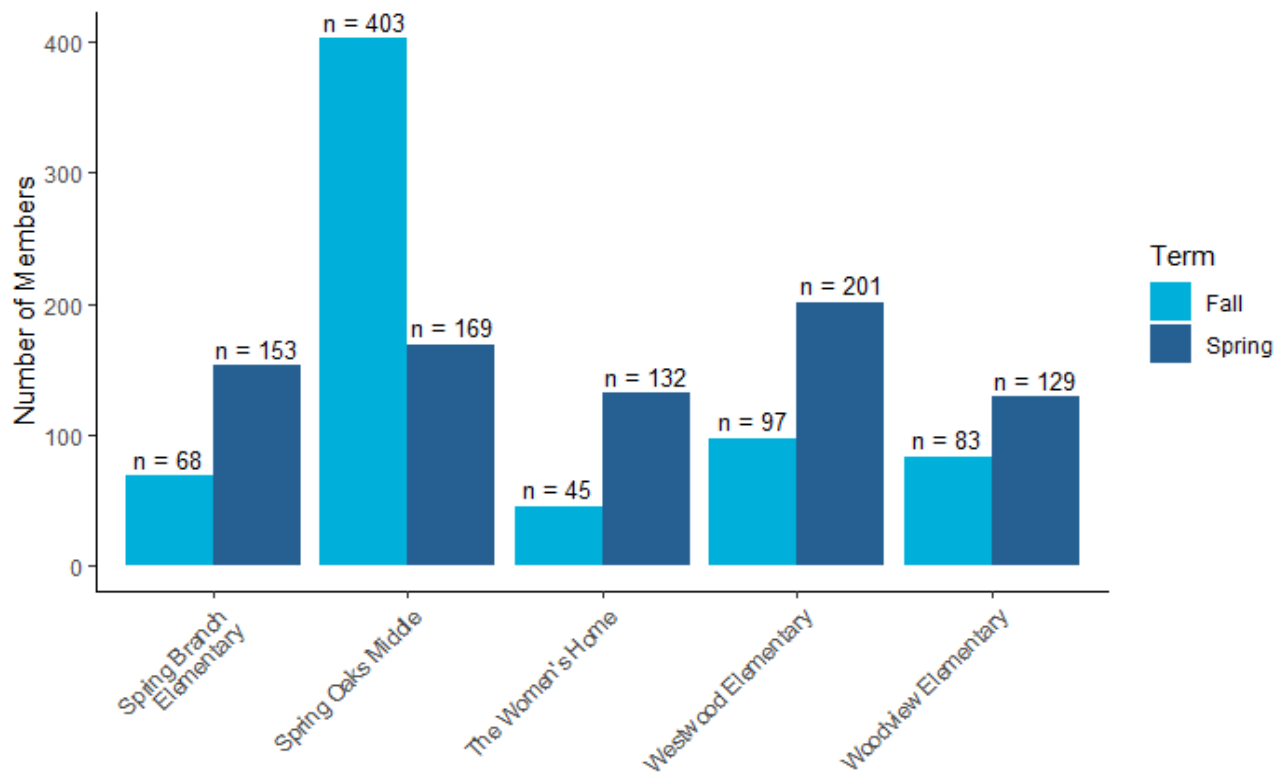
We identified 1,134 members served in BGCGH Texas ACE™ during the 2020–2021 school year. Figure 1 is based on those unique Membership IDs present in the academic and club attendance data set, each representing a single member who attended at least one day of BGCGH Texas ACE™ programming during the school year (see Figure 1 for a breakdown by club and see Appendix One for details on data cleaning and data loss).

These 1,134 members were spread across the five BGCGH clubs from SBISD included in this evaluation analysis. The majority of members (39%) attended Spring Oaks Middle School. The other four schools² experienced a substantial increase in club attendance between the fall and spring terms, likely due to the decrease in restrictions related to COVID-19.

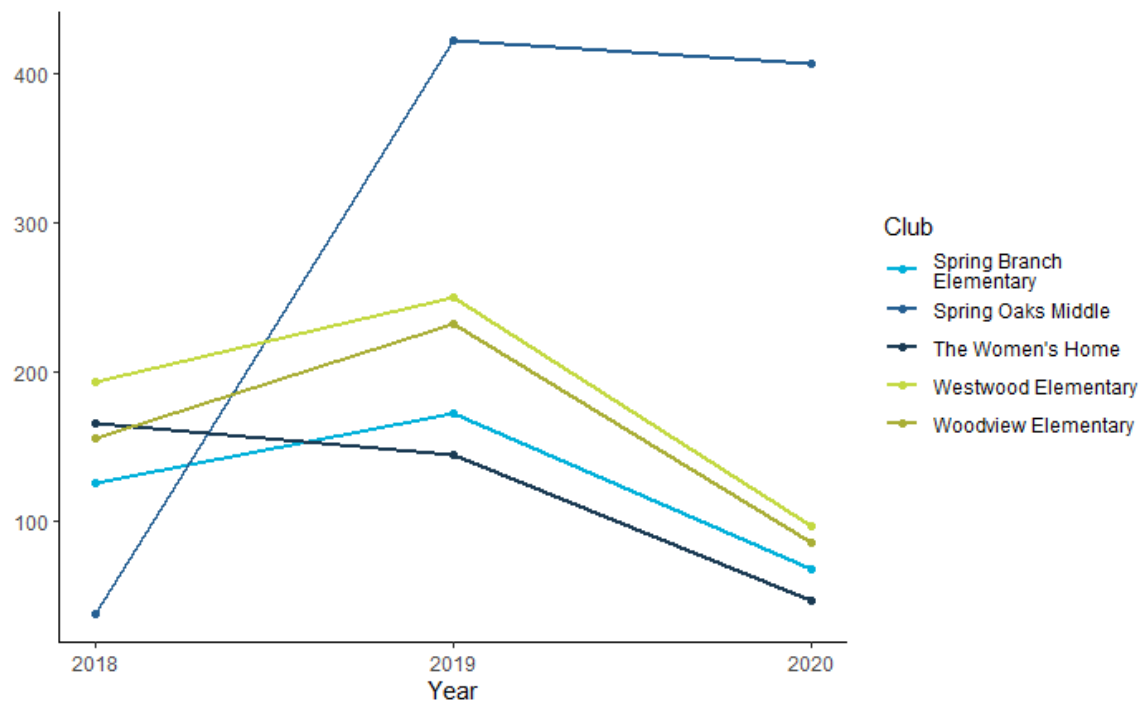
Spring Oaks was the only school to experience a decrease in club attendance between fall and spring terms, and the magnitude of this decrease appears to be due to problematic data. When receiving Spring Oaks' spring term school data set, we removed 117 rows of data during the analysis due to all information aside from ACE™ attendance missing. If the 117 were unique club members, Spring Oaks would have had a spring attendance of 313 members, which is still a decrease in attendance, although a much less marked one. While we note this assumption here, we did not include these potential 117 additional unique members in our analyses throughout the rest of the report.

² The Women's Home serves students from Treasure Forest Elementary School.

Figure 1. Members Who Attended At Least One Day of BGGCH Texas ACE™ Programming (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)



Overall attendance across all clubs decreased in 2020 as compared to prior years (see Figure 2). Spring Oaks Middle School experienced a more modest decrease in attendance than the rest of the clubs in 2020 after experiencing a large increase in attendance in 2019. On average, attendance at the other four clubs decreased by 63%. This change is almost certainly due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency and clubs running their programs at a limited capacity.

Figure 2. Attendance Trends by Club in the Fall Term (2018 to 2020), N=2,600

Members by School Grade Level

BGCCH Texas ACE™ serves students in elementary and middle school. The data provided include students from kindergarten to 8th grade. Table 1 details attendance by club site.

Table 1. Number of Members by Grade Level and Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)

BGCCH Club	Kindergarten	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
Spring Branch Elementary	13	38	37	47	50	36	0	0	0
Spring Oaks Middle	0	0	0	0	0	0	262	194	116
The Women's Home	8	28	43	29	38	29	2	0	0
Westwood Elementary	27	36	37	47	71	80	0	0	0
Woodview Elementary	0	1	37	61	60	53	0	0	0

BGCGH Texas ACE™ Days Attended

We received BGCGH Texas ACE™ attendance records for the 2021 spring term from all club sites except Woodview Elementary. Across the 784 members from spring term data, *members attended an average of 60 days of BGCGH Texas ACE™ programming*. Program attendance for the spring 2021 term by BGCGH club is described in the Table 2 below.

Table 2. Program Attendance Days by Club (Spring 2021), N=653

BGCGH Club	Average # of days	Minimum # of days	Middle 50% # of days	Maximum # of days
Spring Branch Elementary	58.49	1	14–92	147
Spring Oaks Middle	47.05	1	3–95	145
The Women's Home	77.52	5	51–104	155
Westwood Elementary	61.15	1	10–111	148

Academic Grades, Attendance, and Referrals

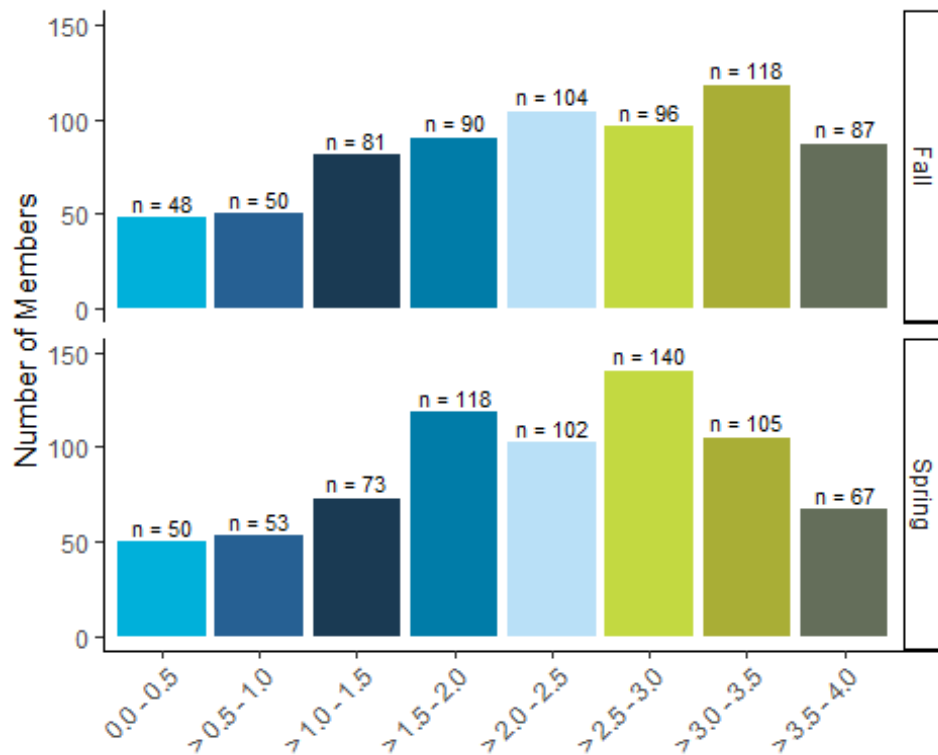
We reviewed and analyzed data on members' academic grades in the four *core courses*: reading, math, social studies, and science. Members' overall core grade point average (GPA) was estimated using the reported letter grades from the core classes.

When reporting numeric values for grades, we used a traditional 0 to 4 grade point scale in which 0 represents a grade of 'F' and 4 represents a grade of 'A.' When calculating *overall core GPA*, we took the average of the numeric grades from the four core classes.

Kindergarten students are not included in any analysis of reporting of grades here due to the small number of members in that grade and a different grading scale.

Overall Grades

The distribution of overall grades is displayed in Figure 3. The most common GPA bucket was 3.0–3.5 in the fall term, and 2.5–3.0 in the spring term. The least common GPA was 0.0–0.5 across both terms. There was a small shift in the grade distribution evident between terms, and a shallow bell curve in the fall term between core GPAs 1.5–3.5. The spring term grade distribution is flatter in the same grade point range. This pattern shows a slight decrease in high core GPAs (3.0–4.0) between terms, while the low core GPAs (0.0–1.0) remained relatively constant.

Figure 3. Core Classes GPA for Members (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)

There are no obvious linear trends in club sites' overall core GPA. Over the past three fall terms, average GPA rose for some clubs and dropped for others. It does appear, however, that the clubs' average GPAs grouped closer to the overall average core GPA of 2.4 in spring 2021. In Figure 4, the overall average core GPA across the five clubs is represented by the dotted black line and has remained fairly constant over time. Only Westwood and Woodview elementary schools had an increasing trend in overall core GPA between fall 2018 and fall 2020. Spring Branch Elementary did see an increase in core GPA between fall 2019 and fall 2020, but the fall 2020 average was still below the fall 2018 average.

Figure 4. Trend in Overall Average Core Classes GPA by Club in the Fall Term (2018 to 2020), N=2,600

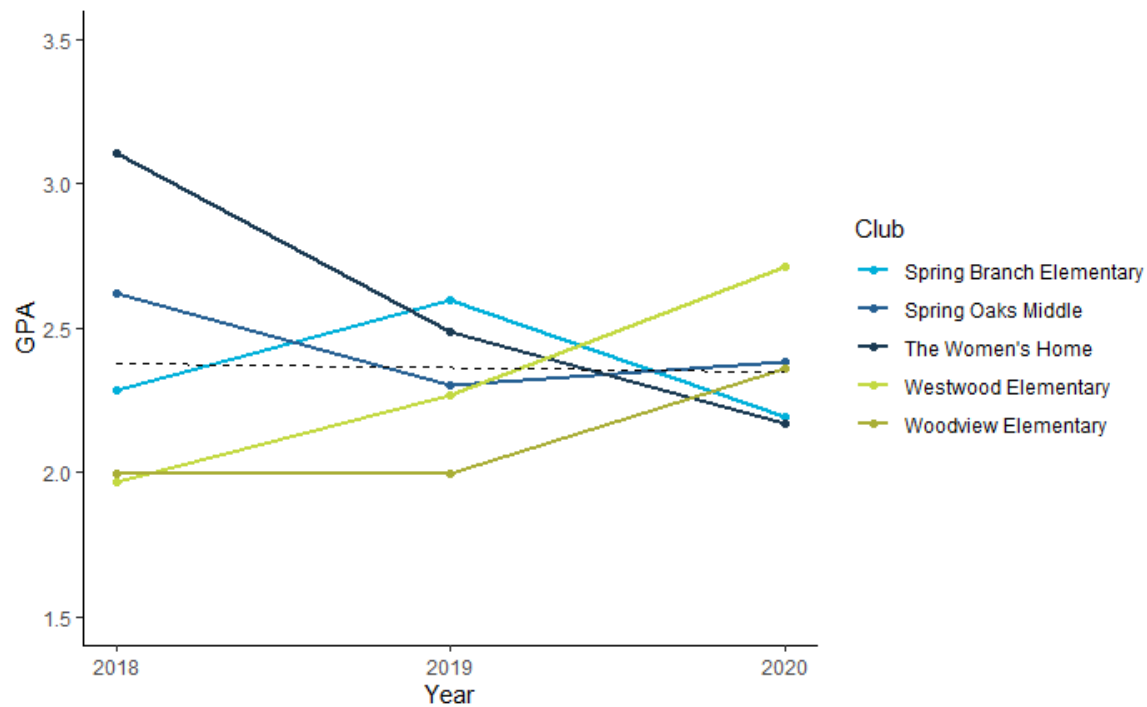


Table 3 provides more detail on the average core GPA across clubs. Between the 2018 and 2020 fall terms, the average core GPA increased by an average of 2%.

Table 3. Average Core GPA Over Fall Terms (2018 to 2020), N=2,600

Members GPA in Core Classes	Percentage of Students Reporting GPA		
	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
0.0–0.5	10%	8%	7%
> 0.5–1.0	8%	8%	7%
> 1.0–1.5	10%	11%	12%
> 1.5–2.0	11%	14%	13%
> 2.0–2.5	13%	15%	15%
> 2.5–3.0	16%	18%	14%
> 3.0–3.5	16%	17%	17%
> 3.5–4.0	16%	9%	14%
Overall Core GPA	2.34	2.29	2.40

Core Course Grades

The core course grades of members served by BGCCH Texas ACE™ programming are displayed in Figure 5 and Figure 6. In Appendix Three, we have included average grades for each of the four core courses by BGCCH club as well. The average grade for each course did not significantly change between the fall and spring terms. The distribution in grades remained relatively similar by core courses as well. A 'B' letter grade was the most common across members.

Figure 5. Average Core Course Grades by Term (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,432

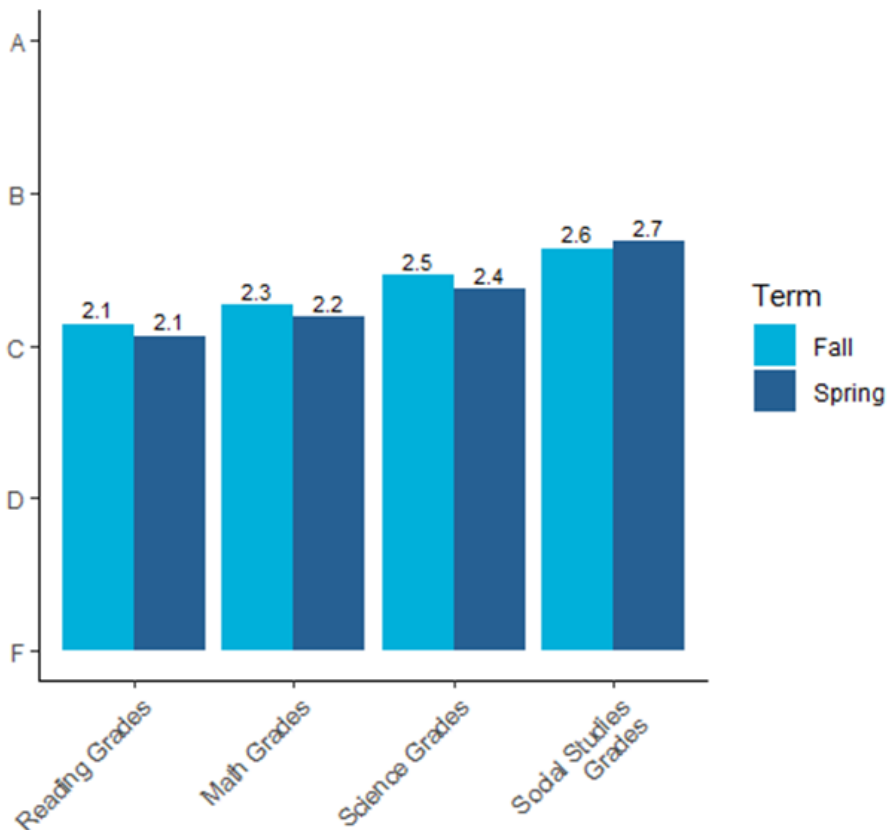
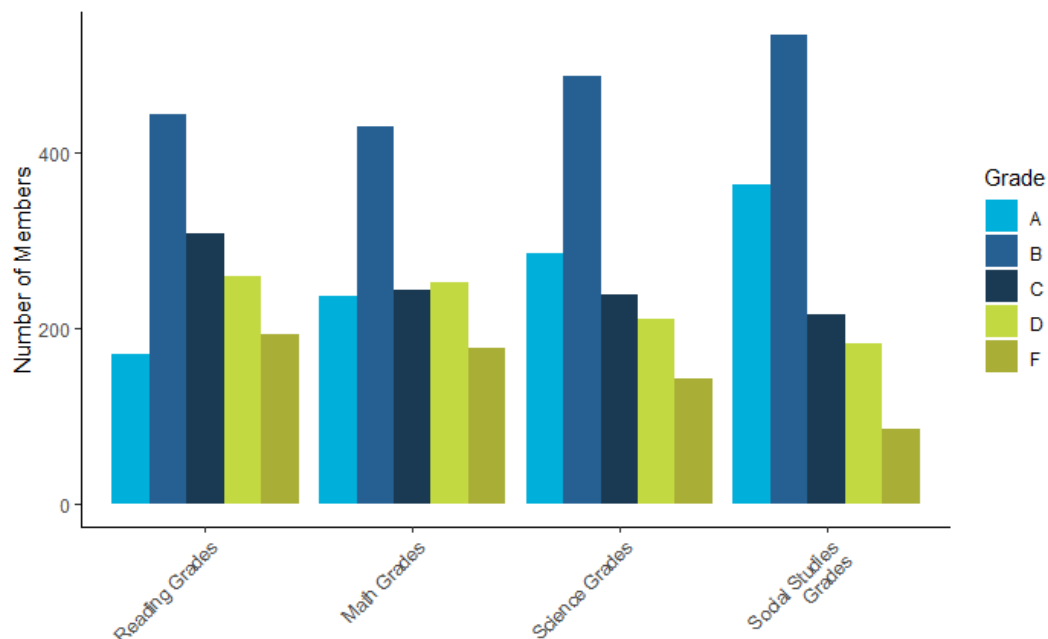


Figure 6. Core Course Grades Across Both Terms and All Clubs (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,432

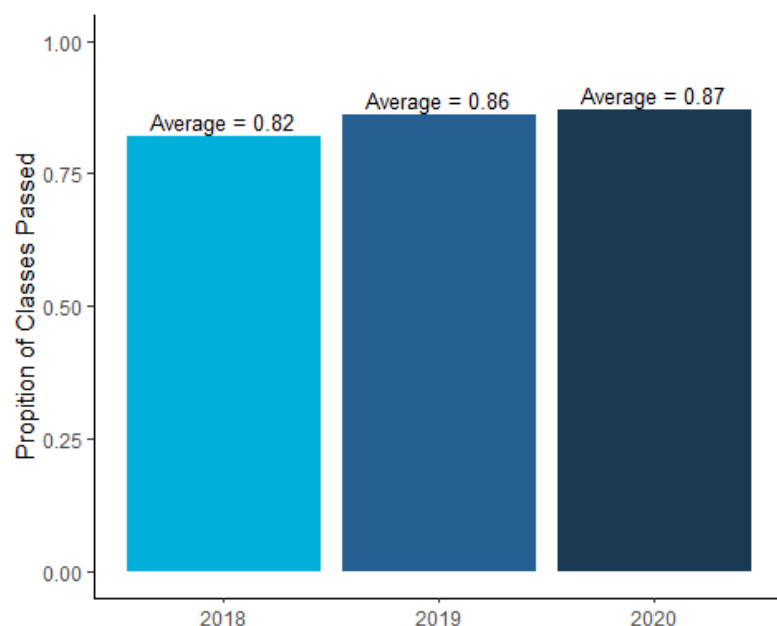
Student-Level Proportion of Core Classes Passed

Next, we analyzed the proportion of all classes that members passed at each of the five BGCCH sites (see Table 4). The large disparity in the average proportion of *core* classes passed is striking, as is the relatively low proportion of core classes passed by members at certain sites. On average at The Women's Home and Spring Branch Elementary, club members passed slightly less than 75% of their core classes. This indicates a need for additional attention to the academic success of club members at those two clubs.

Table 4. Percentage of Core Classes Passed by Members (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,480

BGCCH Club	Average	Minimum	Middle 50%	Maximum
Spring Branch Elementary	74%	0%	50% – 100%	100%
Spring Oaks Middle	88%	0%	75% – 100%	100%
The Women's Home	71%	0%	50% – 100%	100%
Westwood Elementary	84%	0%	75% – 100%	100%
Woodview Elementary	87%	0%	75% – 100%	100%

Over the three fall terms, the average in core classes passed for club members increased slightly (see Figure 7). This corresponds to the marginal increase in the overall core GPA highlighted in Table 3.

Figure 7. Average Number of Classes Passed in the Fall Term (2018 to 2020), N=2,600

School Days Absent

Members across the Texas ACE™ clubs were absent from school an average of five days per term. As detailed in Table 5 below, members at Spring Oaks Middle School and Woodview Elementary had the highest average number of absences per member from school. We excluded data from Woodview Elementary and The Women’s Home spring term as we had concerns with its accuracy. In the spring term, the data indicated that all Woodview Elementary members had 94 days absent and all The Women’s Home members had zero days absent from school; because both of these situations are highly unlikely, those data were not included in the analysis.

Table 5. Average Number of Member School Absences Per Term by Club³
(Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,480

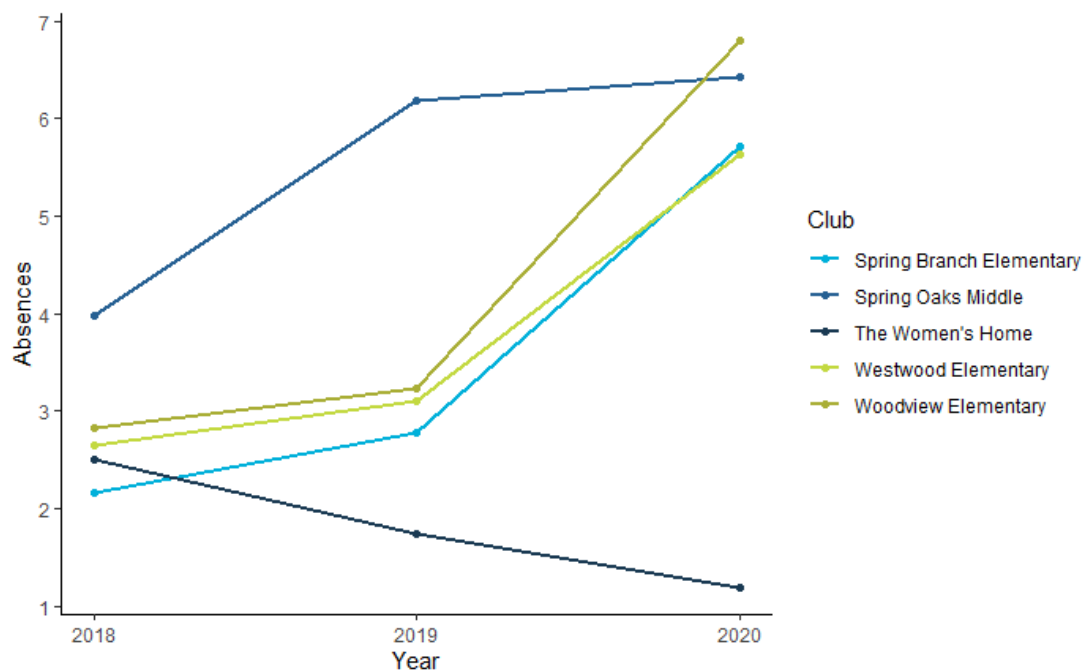
BGCCH Club	Average # days	Median # days	Middle 50% # days	Maximum # days
Spring Branch Elementary	8.2	6	1–13	39
Spring Oaks Middle	4.5	2	0–6	79
The Women's Home	1.2	0	0–1	10
Westwood Elementary	6.0	4	1–8	36
Woodview Elementary	6.7	5	2–10	42

³ Only fall term data is considered for Woodview Elementary and The Women’s Home.

It is also worth noting that Spring Oaks Middle School had a substantially higher percentage of members with 20 or more days absent in the fall term (11.8%) than any other club; the other clubs each had a rate of 4.2% or fewer members with 20 or more days absent.

There has been a significant increase in school day absences over the three years of available fall term data, as can be seen in Figure 8 below. The Women's Home is the only club that goes against this trend, experiencing a continuous decrease in the average number of school day absences. As noted earlier, the quality of spring 2020 term data for The Women's Home may play into this decline, but the fall term data did not have any obvious issues. Westwood, Woodview, and Spring Branch elementary schools experienced an 126% increase in average absences per member per term between the 2018–2019 school year and the 2020–2021 school year. The scale of this increase can almost certainly be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, this trend did begin in the fall of 2019 prior to the declaration of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency in Texas in March of 2020.

Figure 8. Trend in Average Number of School Day Absences by Club in the Fall Term (2018 to 2020), N=2,600



Referrals

The data we received on BGGCH Texas ACE™ members included information on referrals. A referral is a mandatory disciplinary action collected from student performance measures (including report cards). The referrals below were separated into non-criminal and criminal.

Non-Criminal Referrals

There was a total of 25 non-criminal referrals reported in the data set, all in the fall 2020 term. In other words, 25 unique members had at least one non-criminal referral. These were all middle school-aged members.

Criminal Referrals

There was only one member in the data set with any criminal referrals reported and so additional analysis of that variable could not be appropriately conducted. No other reporting on the criminal referrals' variable is included here.

Analyses Based on Regular Attendance

Defining Regular Attendance

Texas ACE™ defines *regular* participation as attending the program 45 days or more during the annual grant period, which includes fall, spring, and summer academic terms. Although, only spring term program attendance is counted here due to the missing Texas ACE™ attendance records from the fall term data, 45 days was considered to still be an appropriate cut off point as most members at each club reached that level of attendance during the length of one school term. For this report, Texas ACE™ program participants with 45 or more days of attendance are defined as having regular attendance; those with 1–44 days of attendance are defined as having non-regular attendance.

Regular Attendance by Club

Across all clubs with Texas ACE™ attendance data, 64.62% of members attended 45 or more program days in spring 2021 (considered regular attendance), while 35.38% attended fewer than 45 program days and had non-regular attendance. As is displayed in Table 6, the percentages of regular program attendance by BGGCH club varied a great deal, from approximately 45% to nearly 97%. We did not receive Texas ACE™ attendance records from Woodview Elementary and so that club's attendance is not included in this report.

Table 6. Regular Attendance of 45 Days or More by Club (Spring 2021), N=653

BGCCH Club	% Members Who Attended 45+ Days of ACE™ Programming
Spring Branch Elementary	71.24%
Spring Oaks Middle	44.91%
The Women's Home	96.97%
Westwood Elementary	54.73%

Comparison to 2019–2020 Year

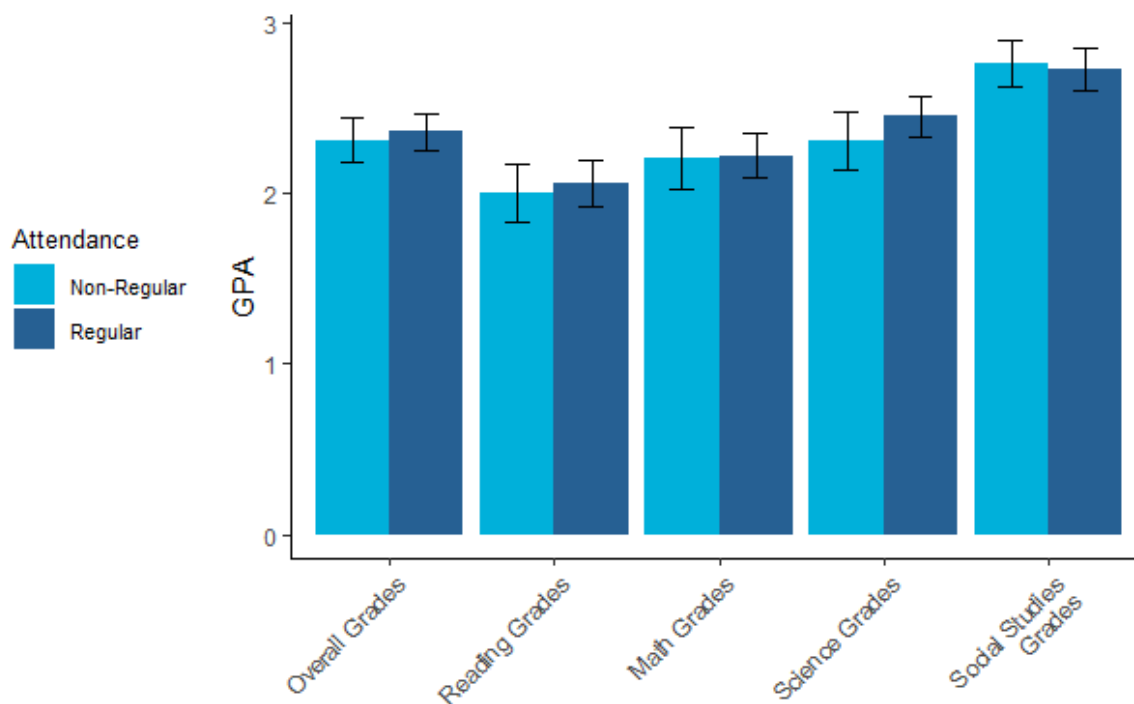
The percentage of all club members classified as regular attendees decreased from the fall 2019 term to the spring 2020 term. In fall 2019, just under 70% of the members were classified as regular attendees, five percent higher than the spring term percentage.

Academic Grades by Regular Attendance

Next, we considered academic grades for spring 2021 in relation to regular and non-regular attendance. As Table 7 and Figure 9, depict, members who were classified regular attendees of BGCCH Texas ACE™ programming had, on average, little difference in academic grades than those who did not regularly attend. Modestly higher grades can be seen in the overall core GPAs, as well as in the reading, math, and science grades; however, these differences are not statistically significant.

Table 7. Average GPA by Regular Attendance (Spring 2021), N=653

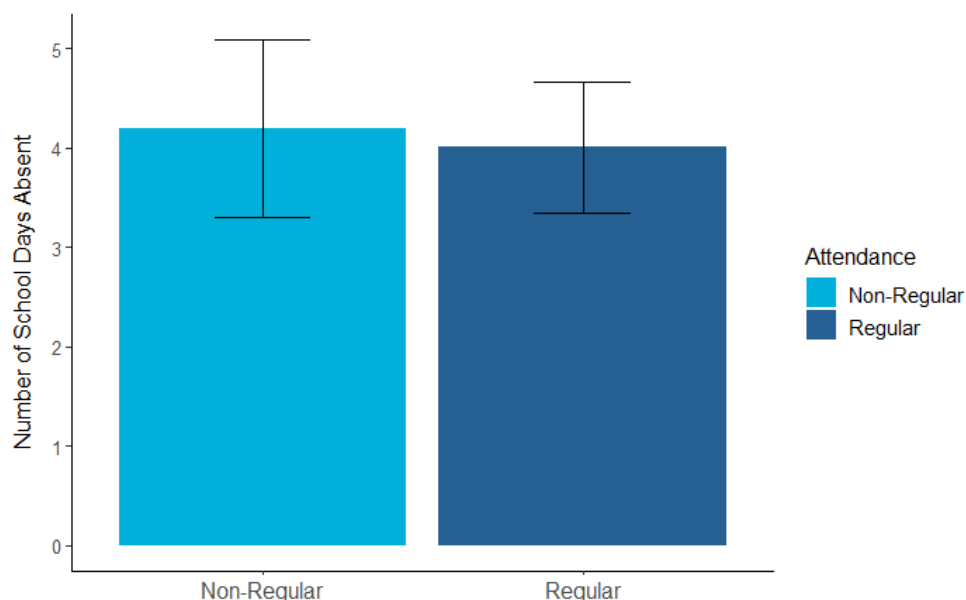
Course	Members With Non-Regular Attendance, N=422	Members With Regular Attendance, N=231
Reading Grades	2.00	2.05
Math Grades	2.20	2.22
Science Grades	2.31	2.45
Social Studies Grades	2.76	2.73
Overall GPA	2.31	2.36

Figure 9. Average Core GPA by Regular Attendance⁴ (Spring 2021), N=653

School Days Absent by Regular Attendance

Members classified as regular attendees at BGCCH Texas ACE™ programming had only slightly fewer absences than members classified as non-regular attendees. The difference (0.2 fewer absences for regular attendees) was not statistically significant (see Figure 10).

⁴ The margin of error associated with the average core GPA is displayed in the brackets at the top of each bar. A bracket's width corresponds to a 95% confidence interval.

Figure 10. School Days Absent by Regular Attendance⁵ (Spring 2021), N=653

Referrals by Regular Attendance

In the spring 2021 term data, there were no reports of non-criminal or criminal referrals. The 25 non-criminal referrals reported previously in this report are all from the fall term. Given that we could not analyze fall 2020 term attendance data, we do not offer any findings related to referrals by regular or non-regular program attendance.

Club-Level Data

We also used club-level data from the Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI).⁶ in our analysis. The NYOI is a survey of the experiences and perceptions of the club completed by club members.⁷ Individual responses to survey items are compiled into a variety of measures, seven of which make up the Club Experience Indicator and are detailed in this report: Emotional Safety, Physical Safety, Fun, Sense of Belonging, Adult Connections, Adult Expectations, and Recognition. Each of the seven measure is reported in aggregate for each

⁵ The margin of error associated with the average core GPA is displayed in the brackets at the top of each bar. A bracket's width corresponds to a 95% confidence interval.

⁶ For more about NYOI and how it measures Boys and Girls Club experiences, see: <https://clubexperience.blog/2018/02/22/how-do-we-measure-the-club-experience/>

⁷ It should be noted that some items included in these measures (particularly the items constituting the measures of Sense of Belonging and Staff Expectations) could have been understood by club members as referring to the host school or the larger community rather than specifically to the BGGCH club and, therefore, may need to be interpreted cautiously.

BGCGH club. More information on the NYOI and the application of findings can be found through the Boys & Girls Clubs of America⁸.

In this section, we describe the results from the club-level data. The data represent members' experiences at their BGCGH Texas ACE™ clubs in the fall 2020 term in comparison to fall 2019 term NYOI results. The information we have detailed here can help clubs identify areas where they make significant impact and can inform decisions on how to hasten the development of innovative ways to continue to make that positive impact, even in the current climate. These data can also help direct BGCGH club staff and leadership to areas where their services could be improved or redesigned. Only four of the clubs delivered NYOI data, with the exception of Woodview Elementary.

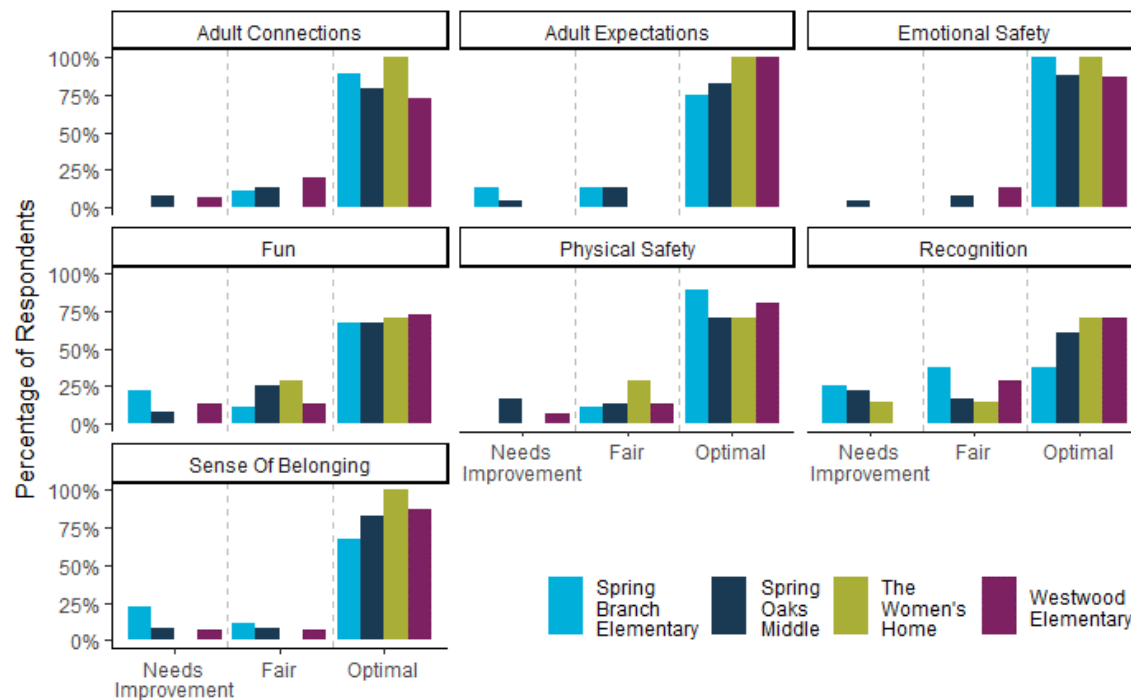
National Youth Outcomes Initiative – Member Club Experience

The NYOI Club Experience Indicator Measures data are collected directly from members in an annual survey and were provided to us in the form of percentages of members indicating that their club's performance was *Optimal (Doing Great)*, *Fair (Doing Fine)*, or *Needs Improvement (Room to Grow)* on each of the seven Club Experience Indicator Measures: Emotional Safety, Physical Safety, Fun, Sense of Belonging, Adult Connections, Adult Expectations, and Recognition. The four clubs collected 58 valid survey response from their members. The Meadows Institute team ultimately does not know the reason for the large discrepancy between the total number of members and the number of valid survey responses, but the following factors may play a role in accounting for the difference: we only received results from valid survey responses, and more members could have been surveyed but did not successfully complete the survey; members under the age of 9 were not surveyed; only members served in-person were surveyed; the survey is typically conducted over a limited time period.

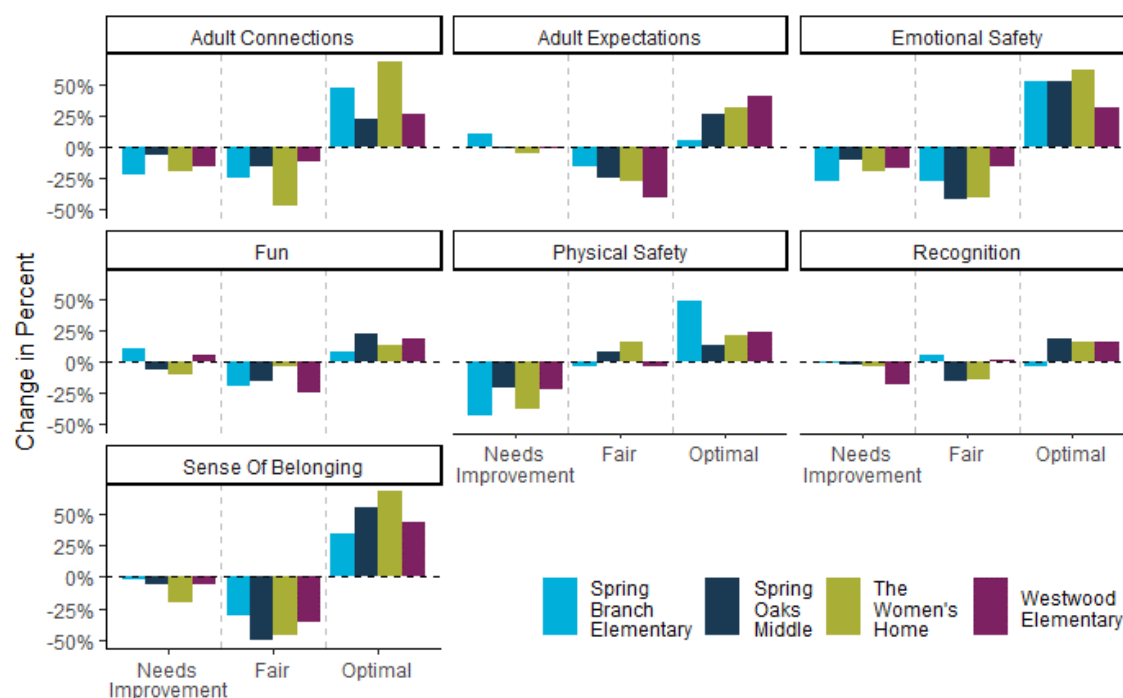
The four BGCGH Texas ACE™ clubs generally followed the same pattern across measures as detailed in Figure 11. For almost all measures, the majority of members reported an *Optimal* experience. Between 75% and 100% of club members reported an *Optimal* experience for the Adult Connections, Adult Expectations, Emotional Safety, and Sense of Belonging measures. Spring Branch Elementary is a slight outlier for Sense of Belonging, with 25% of the members stating that area *Needs Improvement*. Fun and Physical Safety received slightly fewer *Optimal* ratings than the previous measures, and Recognition was the measure the most members claimed as *Needs Improvement*. Both Spring Branch Elementary and Spring Oaks Middle School clubs reported approximately 25% of their members stating Recognition *Needs Improvement*, while roughly 15% of The Women's Home club members indicated the same.

⁸ For more information on the NYOI, see: <https://clubexperience.blog/2018/02/22/how-do-we-measure-the-club-experience/>

Figure 11. NYOI Club Experience Indicator Measures (Fall 2020), N=58



When we compared the NYOI results for the 2020 fall term to the 2019 fall term (see Figure 12), we noted substantial improvements. All measures had a positive change in the percent of members reporting an *Optimal* experience, most dramatically in Emotional Safety and Sense of Belonging. Fun and Recognition saw the smallest increase. The percentage of members reporting *Needs Improvement* increased for Adult Expectations and Fun at Spring Branch Elementary and for Fun at Westwood Elementary. Perhaps the most remarkable finding is that the percentage of students reporting feeling *Optimal* Physical Safety at the clubs increased during a pandemic.

Figure 12. Change in NYOI Club Experience Indicator Measures (Fall 2019 to Fall 2020)⁹

Staff Interview Findings

Like the spring prior, the 2020–2021 academic year were significantly different than imagined when BGCCH was initially awarded funding for Texas ACE™ programming. As such, existing quantitative measures of club activity, progress, experience, and impact do not suitably capture everything that took place during this unprecedented time, nor can quantitative measures appropriately credit the creativity and flexibility of staff or the unique challenges that a particular site or set of sites may have faced. Thus, the Meadows Institute project team conducted semi-structured interviews with BGCCH staff to reflect the realities of the BGCCH Texas ACE™ clubs during the 2020–2021 academic year. The three staff members interviewed were from several BGCCH ACE™ club locations with a variety of roles and responsibilities for those clubs. We conducted interviews in June 2021 via video conference software and provided interviewees with information about the purpose and structure of the interview, discussed how we would protect each interviewee's anonymity in all information reported, and obtained their consent to participate. The interviewees had an opportunity to ask questions.

Interviewees detailed several adjustments that BGCCH made due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020 and onward, including reduced capacity and staff, increased workloads for

⁹ The number of valid NYOI survey response from fall 2019 is unknown to the Meadows Institute. Fifty-eight (58) valid surveys were completed for the fall 2020 NYOI survey.

staff, virtual parent orientations and club activities, altered or new physical spaces, and COVID-19 preventive health measures (mask mandates, social distancing, temperature checks, and hand washing). In this section, we detail the commonalities and key themes we identified from this qualitative data collection, organized into strengths and challenges.

Strengths

Staff flexibility helped club members adjust in the fall. Club members who returned to school and club activities in the fall of 2020 were greeted with enthusiasm that was also tempered by significant remaining restrictions and the residual impact of an atypical and potentially traumatic spring and summer. Staff members reported that club members were “zoned out” for the first several weeks of the fall term, so staff adjusted club activities and expectations to account for this. For example, one staff member discussed focusing more on “just having fun” early in the fall, saying that doing so allowed for increased effectiveness of academically focused activities once club members reacclimated. The social and emotional aspects of the adjustment period were evident as well, as was one unanticipated benefit: staff reported significant improvements in behavior and in members following staff instructions. They attributed this to the experience of “working together against COVID.” This observation speaks to some of the complex impacts of the pandemic year that are yet to be fully understood.

Relationships continued to be key. All staff members interviewed mentioned the importance of their relationships with club members, citing examples ranging from the club members’ comfort in the clubs during the pandemic to their readjustment to typical club activities during the fall term and their willingness to be vulnerable and ask for help with their academics. One staff member also described a feeling of responsibility to members during the 2020–2021 academic year because of their relationships, saying “[club members] listen to us. They trust us.” That sense of responsibility then contributed to an increase in staff engagement and going “above and beyond” for the club members (e.g., always customizing club activities to best fit the club members in attendance on any given day).

Staff maintained critical connections to partner schools. As previously described in the 2019–2020 academic year evaluation analysis report on Texas ACE™, BGCGH staff identified strong, positive relationships with teachers and administrators at their SBISD affiliated schools as crucial to the success of their clubs and members. Interviewees acknowledged the challenges of teaching during the pandemic and highlighted the benefit to club members of the positive interplay between the schools and the clubs. The staff interviewed reported that they put effort into maintaining “open lines of communication” with school staff and that effort paid dividends in terms of collaboration, flexibility, and support.

Challenges

Protocol adjustments were resource intensive. All interviewed staff identified variations of this theme, including having fewer staff members and a greater workload due to pandemic restrictions and requirements. Other challenges included enforcing more boundaries with parents (e.g., parents could not walk their child into the club facilities) and members (e.g., mask and handwashing rules) and the creativity required for virtual and socially distant in-person activities. Another complication due to the pandemic was the limited space in which to hold club activities while adhering to social distancing public health standards.

Quantity of services was emphasized. Interviewees described the importance of “hitting [their] numbers” and feeling that these quantitative markers were given too much priority, saying that the focus on those metrics detracted from their ability to provide quality services to the members who were present. While interviewees described support from BGCGH administrative staff around this and other challenges, they also relayed their feelings that the emphasis on enrollment figures created stress at all levels of the organization.

Virtual activities could not fully replace in-person club attendance. Interviewees were able to identify several positive aspects of virtual club activities (e.g., maintaining connections to club members and increased engagement with entire families), but they said the virtual activities were always lacking when compared to in-person options: “It’s just not the same.” Varying requirements for in-person club capacity and hours created a need for virtual options even after clubs reopened in fall 2020, and staff members interviewed reported looking forward to returning to full in-person capacity operations as soon as possible.

Staff interviewed described the value that BGCGH continued to provide throughout the 2020–2021 academic year. While the challenges identified should be addressed, our conclusion from the interviews is that *a focus on connection with positive, supportive, and engaged relationships with club members continues to be a guiding principle for BGCGH staff.*

Results and Implications

Major Findings

The analysis of BGCGH Texas ACE™ data and staff interview data from the 2020–2021 school year yielded four primary findings related to attendance, academic performance, member experiences at clubs, and staff relationships with members.

Attendance

There were 1,134 SBISD students served by the program, and a majority were considered regular attendees who attended at least 45 days. During the spring term, when Texas ACE™ attendance records were available, members attended an average of 60.23 program days over

the course of the spring term, with 422 members (64%)¹⁰ attending at least 45 program days. A total of 784 members participated in BGCCH Texas ACE™ during the spring. This was a slightly smaller number of regular attendees than there were in the during fall 2020 term. There was a decrease of under 100 total members and under 80 regular attendees between the two fall terms. Although an ultimate benchmark in attendance and regular attendance is unknown to the Meadows Institute, 1,100 is a considerable number of students served.

Academic Performance and Attendance

There were no significant associations between regular program attendance and academic performance and the number of school days absent. In the two previous analyses of the 2019 fall term and the 2018–2019 school year, we noted two statistically significant associations between regular attendance and academic performance: a positive association between regular attendance and member grades, as well as a negative association between regular attendance and school days absent. The overall trend in regular and non-regular members' academic performance did not change between 2018 and 2020 fall terms. Unlike grades, absences substantially increased in the 2020–2021 school year, equally affecting the number of absences for members with regular and non-regular attendance. The explanation for why this school year does not trend with previous years is likely due to changes in how schooling was delivered, or how BGCCH clubs needed to change their operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Member Experience

The results from the NYOI, which capture information by individual BGCCH club, indicate that BGCCH Texas ACE™ clubs are performing admirably in many areas, and these data highlight sizable improvements in member satisfaction with aspects of the clubs. With a few exceptions, the majority of members across all clubs rated their experiences as 'optimal.' Compared to the previous year, most of the clubs saw an increase in optimal ratings by members.

Staff Relationships With Members

Finally, many of the staff experienced challenges and frustrations operating the clubs and reported difficulty providing services virtually. The staff, however, were able to work within these challenges to continue positive relationships with the club members and with their host school. They provided support to children and youth in highly trying times, and their ability to do so should be applauded.

¹⁰ The percent of members in the spring term who attended at least 45 programs days does not included Woodview Elementary, due to a lack of ACE™ attendance data from Woodview Elementary. Woodview Elementary did supply spring academic data for members who attended at least one day of ACE™ programing, and these members are included in the total number of members (784) who participated in ACE™.

Research Limitations

We consider the analyses, statistics, and conclusions we offer in this report to be the most accurate interpretation of the data, with the understanding that all reporting rests on the quality of the data provided as well as the limitations of our research design. While we took reasonable data quality assurance steps, data collection happened outside of the purview of the Meadows Institute; thus, data quality cannot be fully guaranteed.

There are several limitations we identified related to study design and data availability that should be taken into consideration. For example, academic data were only provided for members who attended at least one day of BGCGH Texas ACE™ programming. Because a sample of students who did not attend any BGCGH Texas ACE™ programming was not available, a truly suitable comparison group did not exist in the data, and comparisons on outcomes of interest (e.g., academic performance) could only be based on regular versus non-regular program attendance, not put in the context of the larger SBISD or BGCGH student populations. Also, it is worth highlighting that causal interpretation of this data is not possible because of the lack of random assignment to program participation (i.e., we cannot point to Texas ACE™ programming alone as producing any specific impacts on members). Though this aspect of the data is unlikely to change, as it is a result of the laudable BGCGH policy to serve all eligible students, it should be acknowledged as a methodical constraint that does limit the performance of true impact analysis.

The use of aggregated, club-level data (i.e., NYOI) to determine club experiences can also be problematic, and attempting to make judgements about the experience of individual members from such aggregated data is not recommended. Aligning those club experience measures with each other, or with club member attendance and academic performance data, is also problematic because of the different forms and aims of the measures; thus, we did not attempt to report those types of analyses here.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The 2020–2021 school year has been unprecedented. During the fall term, which represents some of the most grueling times of the COVID-19 pandemic, BGCGH continued to serve its members and offer consistency during inconsistent times. Their continuation of valuable service provision is a highly noteworthy conclusion of this report.

While BGCGH Texas ACE™ club attendance slightly decreased from fall 2019 to fall 2020, it increased for four of the five club sites in spring 2020. This increase adds evidence that members and their families appreciated the BGCGH program as many members rejoined when danger from the pandemic began to subside.

Our overall recommendation related to the entire BGCGH Texas ACE™ program can be succinctly summarized: BGCGH Texas ACE™ is comprised of caring, committed staff who are making a difference. We recommend **continued support for BGCGH Texas ACE™ staff and the excellent and meaningful work happening in SBISD communities**. At the individual club level, develop methods to collect data more consistently to allow for a more robust analysis of the impact of BGCGH Texas ACE™ on members' academic performance over time; in turn, this can be used to determine if program changes improve desired outcomes. We also recommend BGCGH Texas ACE™ clubs build a more robust system of internal and external assessment of club services and experiences. As part of this, we recommend including assessments that are not solely reliant on members' opinions. For example, we suggest completing the Youth Program Quality Assessment Tool (YPQA)¹¹ in conjunction with the NYOI to allow for a more accurate representation of how the club operates. Additionally, we recommend that BGCGH provide staff training on supporting club members through these challenging times, including their academic, social, and emotional development, and BGCGH should continue to focus on professional development for staff overall. Finally, as COVID-19 has so clearly demonstrated, building and maintaining positive relationships with community members and partners is a worthwhile activity, and BGCGH should continue to invest their time in doing so. As part of this, we recommend that BGCGH increase support for its Texas ACE™ staff to identify and foster relationships with community partners, and we recommend BGCGH enhance data collection and reporting across BGCGH programs, both of which will help improve the sustainability of BGCGH's role in the Greater Houston community.

In sum, BGCGH was able to continue to deliver meaningful support to their members and communities through the highly challenging 2020–2021 school year as members, staff, and communities navigated the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now that the pandemic's effect on daily life appears to be decreasing, BGCGH has proven its ability to respond to administrative and societal challenges brought on unexpectedly by continuing to embody and prioritize its mission and members.

¹¹ More information on the Youth Program Quality Assessment Tool (YPQA) can be found here, <https://powerofdiscovery.org/youth-program-quality-assessment-ypqa-tool>

Appendix One: Member-Level Data Cleaning Notes

There were 1,504 records in the member-level data set after combining the 10 separate data files from both the fall 2020 and spring 2021 terms. Of those, 124 records were removed for the following reasons:

- Seven records were removed because of duplicate IDs with different information reported and no way to distinguish which was accurate.
- 117 records were removed because they were missing all data besides the number of Texas ACE™ days attended.

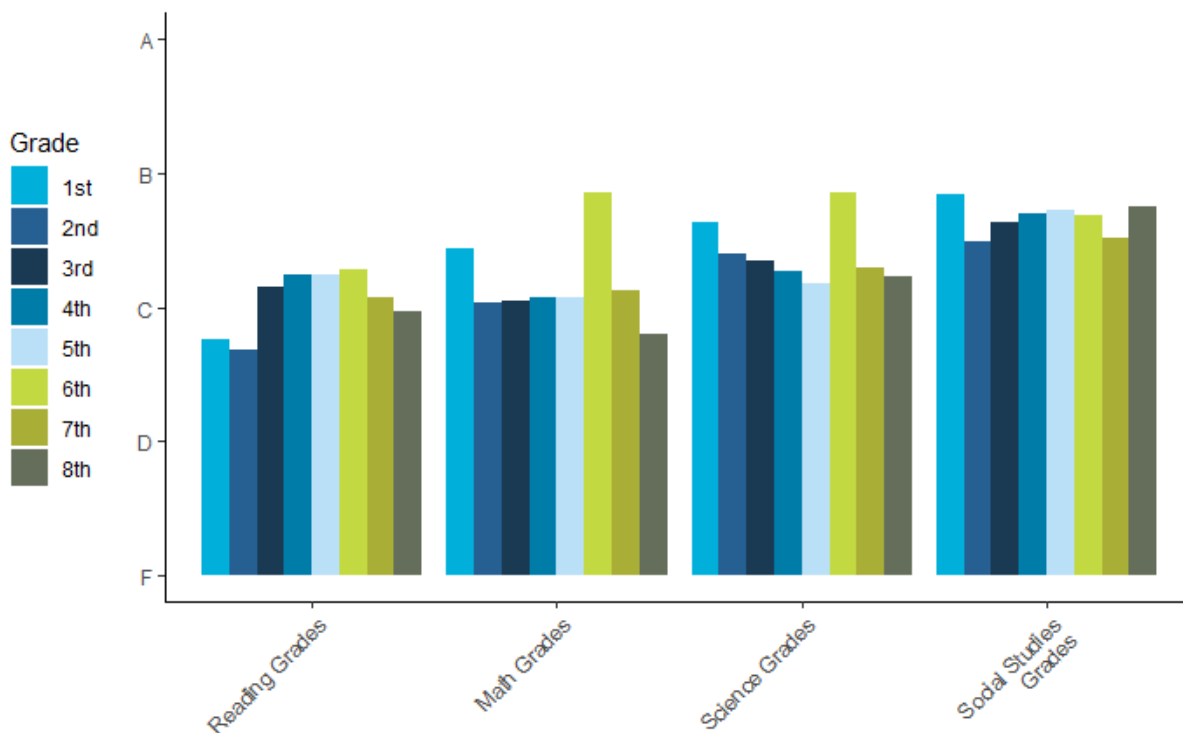
These changes yielded a data file with 1,480 records; 1,134 unique members were used in the member-level analyses in this report.

Appendix Two: Additional Member-Level Details

Core Course Grades by Member Grade

The distribution of core course grades by members' school grade level is displayed in Figure 13 below. There are only slight overall patterns both within and between core courses. Though that absence of patterns may be intuitively surprising, it should be noted that the overall range of average grades in these core courses is relatively small—that is, the average grade in core courses is between a grade of 'C' and a grade of 'B' in a majority of courses across multiple school grade levels.

Figure 13. Mean GPA by Core Course and Grade Level (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,432

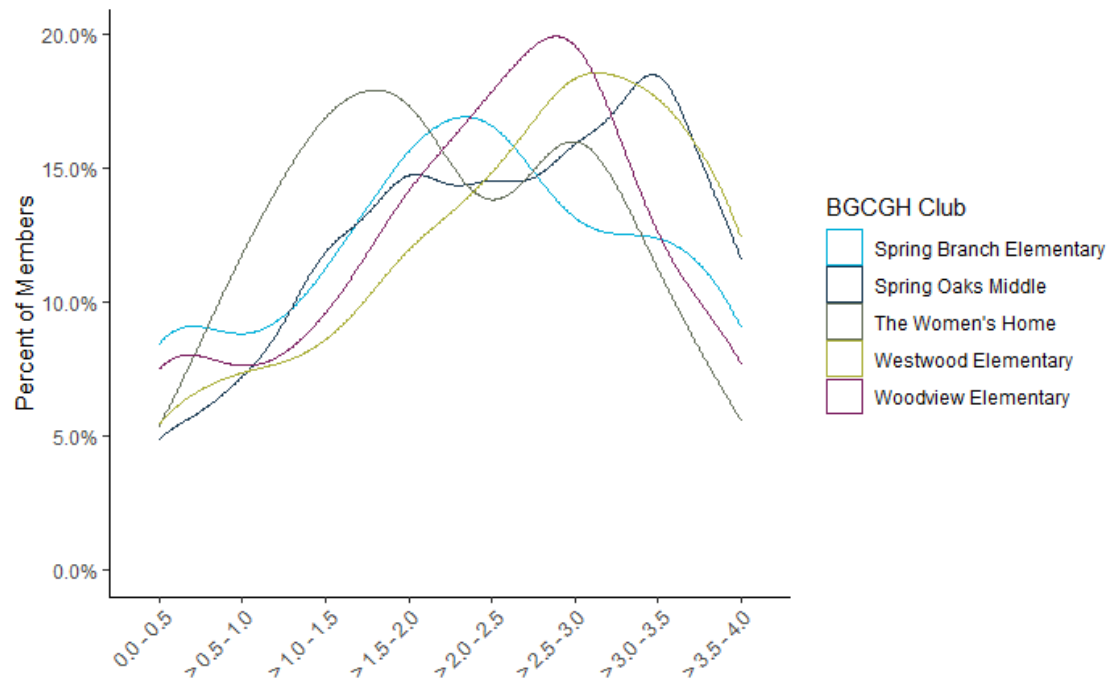


Appendix Three: Additional Club-Level Details

Average Overall Grades by Club

Figure 14 details the distribution of GPAs at each of the five BGCCH clubs. Spring Oaks Middle School had the highest percentage of members receiving high overall grades, while The Women's Home had the highest percentage of members receiving low overall grades.

Figure 14. Overall Member Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,432



Average Grades for Each Core Subject by Club

Figures 15, 16, 17, and 18 display the average grades by club in each of the four core subject areas: reading, math, science, and social studies, respectively.

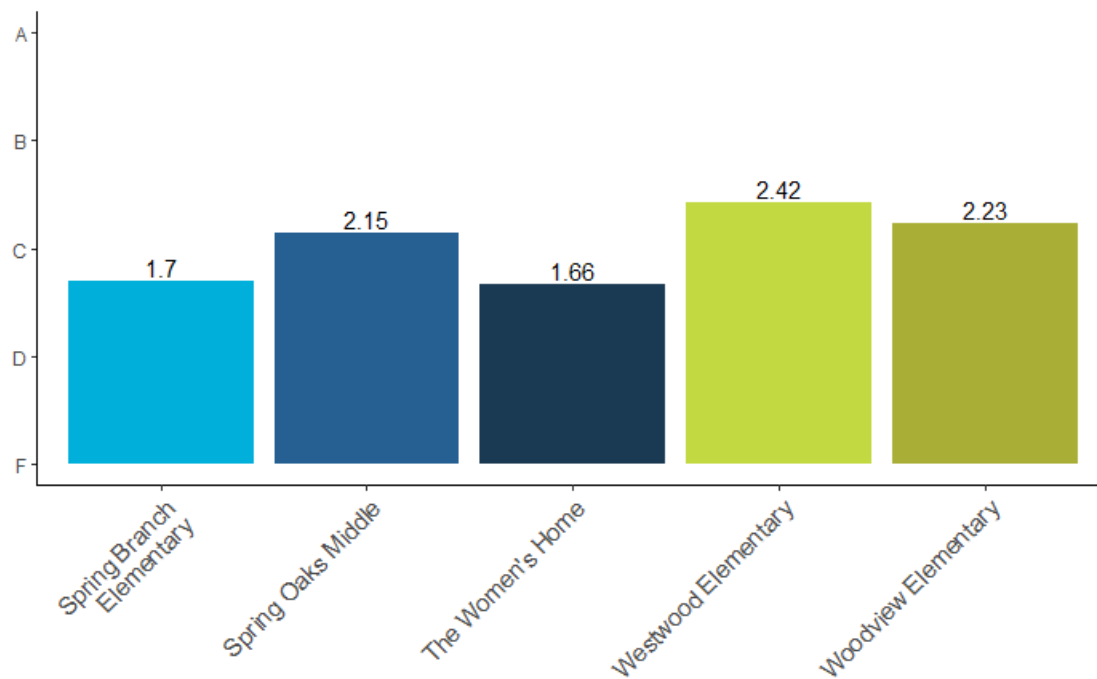
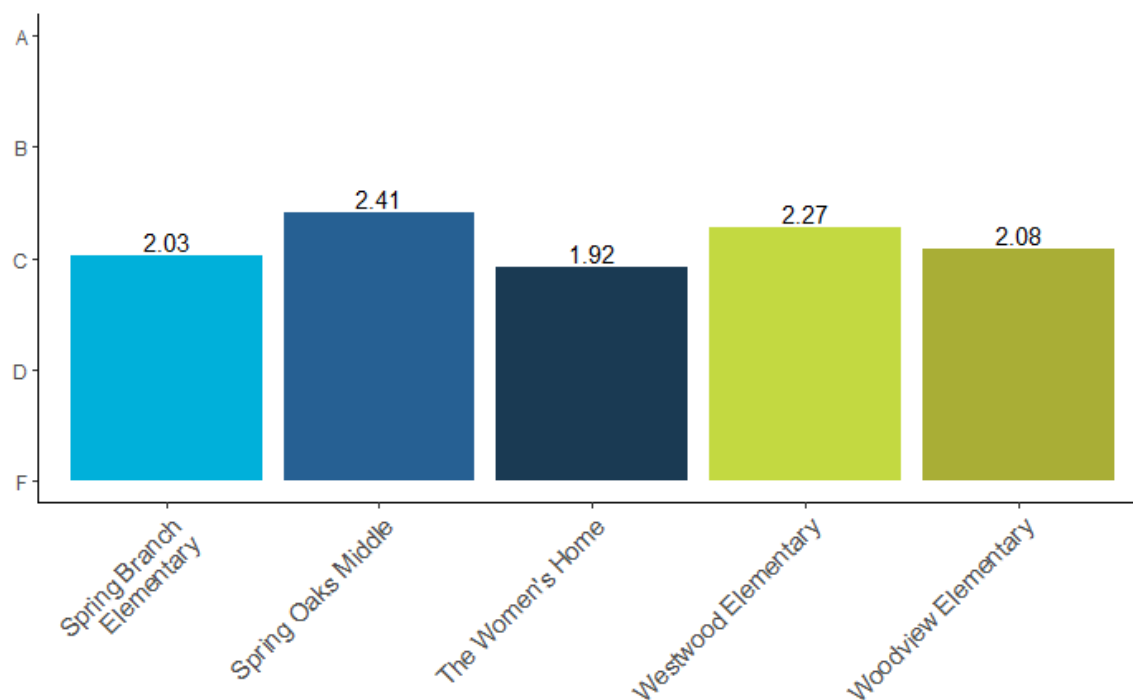
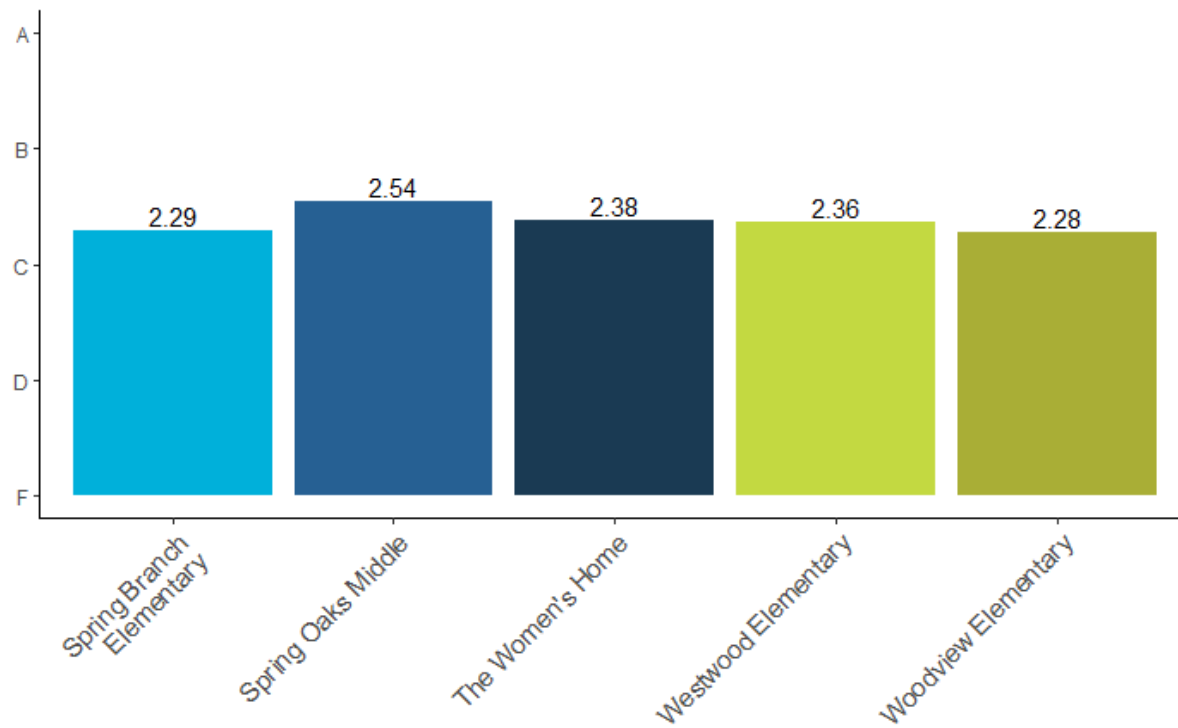
Figure 15. Reading Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,376**Figure 16. Math Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,340**

Figure 17. Science Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,364**Figure 18. Social Studies Grades by Club (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021), N=1,380**