



OPEN DOORS SUMMER PILOT SITE PROFILE

Seattle Interagency

Prepared for the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) by Education Northwest.

Overview

Seattle Interagency Open Doors received 2024 summer pilot funding to support summer programming at its Columbia and Orion sites. Seattle Interagency Open Doors is a district-run Open Doors program that is part of a larger, alternative high school within Seattle Public Schools, Interagency. Open Doors students can earn their GED and are eligible for a scholarship to any of the Seattle Colleges. Open Doors students have access to all programs and services Interagency provides, including job training programs, a teen health center, and other services and resources.

During the school year, Open Doors students can access Seattle Interagency's job training program that includes a construction pre-apprenticeship, a student-run café, a carpentry program, a bike mechanics program, and a sustainable agriculture program.

Seattle Interagency program overview, school year 2023–24

- GED Plus or high school diploma
- School district
- Community type: City, large
- **93** students enrolled in SY 2023–24
- Average age at enrollment: **17.5**
- Average credits at enrollment: **7.4**

Source: Evaluation team analysis of Appendix R and Open Doors end-of-year data.



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Summer 2024 pilot program design and implementation

In previous summers, Interagency Open Doors opened during the summer months on a limited basis. Students could stop by for GED prep support at certain times, but the program was not fully open during the summer. It did not offer the same types of career-connected learning opportunities during the summer as it did during the school year.

OVERVIEW OF SUMMER PROGRAM PILOT

The summer 2024 program was meant to support students to stay engaged, make progress toward their GED, and provide career exposure and experience (table 1). During the summer, Interagency Open Doors continued to offer academic support, as they do during the school year, for GED or high school diploma completion. The program also worked with new and existing partners to offer summer career-connected learning for the first time.

Table 1. Seattle Interagency summer 2024 pilot goals, activities, and intended outcomes

Goals	Summer program activities	Intended outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New/deeper programming• New/deeper partnerships• Expanded student participation in summer learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GED instruction and testing• High school instruction and testing• Career-connected learning• Unique or innovative program activities limited to the summer months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicators of academic progress earning• Pathway completion• Retention from spring to fall• Student well-being and stability• College or career skills

New or expanded community partnerships

Interagency Open Doors used summer pilot funding to grow community partnerships (table 2). To support its goal of increasing access to career-connected learning, Interagency Open Doors established a new partnership with Reign Concept Salon, LLC. Interagency Open Doors also partnered with Yes We Can Flaggers and an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) instructor from Seattle Public Schools to provide students with flagging and OSHA certificates.

Table 2. Seattle Interagency summer 2024 pilot partners and activities

Partners	Key summer activities
Yes We Can Flaggers	Flagging certification course
OSHA Instructor from Seattle Public Schools	OSHA 10 certificate course
Reign Concept Salon, LLC*	Five-week cosmetology course with a focus on social-emotional learning

*Indicates a new partnership

Two options for career-connected learning

Through a new partnership with Reign Concept Salon, LLC, Interagency Open Doors offered a five-week program to prepare students to work in the field of cosmetology. This course, which was free to students, offered similar content to fee-based cosmetology courses. Over the course of five weeks, students in the program attended class from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the school. Instructors shared social-emotional learning (SEL) lessons, then offered hands-on instruction on various cosmetology topics including hair, nails, and makeup.

For students who did not sign up for the cosmetology program, Interagency Open Doors offered an opportunity to receive flagging and OSHA 10 certification during a two-and-a half-day session.

Support for overall well-being, belonging, and basic needs

As a part of the cosmetology program, students completed standards-aligned SEL lessons, reflected on their academic and personal journeys, and built community. Interagency Open Doors also used summer pilot funds to provide barrier reduction support for students, including food and work-related clothing and materials.

Student participation in summer 2024 pilot

EXPANDED OUTREACH EFFORTS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS AND HIGH DEMAND FOR THE COSMETOLOGY PROGRAM

Seattle Interagency staff members said that they conducted outreach to students at the end of the 2023–24 school year. They identified all Interagency students who qualify for Open Doors, then identified which students were post-resident youth. The staff hoped that offering high school credit [and high-interest options would encourage diploma track students to re-engage with school and get excited about finishing so they can move on to their career. Students all shared that they heard about the summer program from a staff member at Interagency.



We work really hard on consistent communication, regardless of how often they come. We want them to know that no matter what, they have a place that they can come.”

Seattle Interagency staff member

Interagency then provided an opportunity for students to learn about, and sign up for, the cosmetology program. Through hands-on lessons, students learned barbering, makeup, hair braiding, and other cosmetology skills. While not all students who signed up were able to participate, there was waiting list. Fewer students than anticipated participated in the flagger and OSHA certification training course.

STUDENTS SERVED IN SUMMER 2024

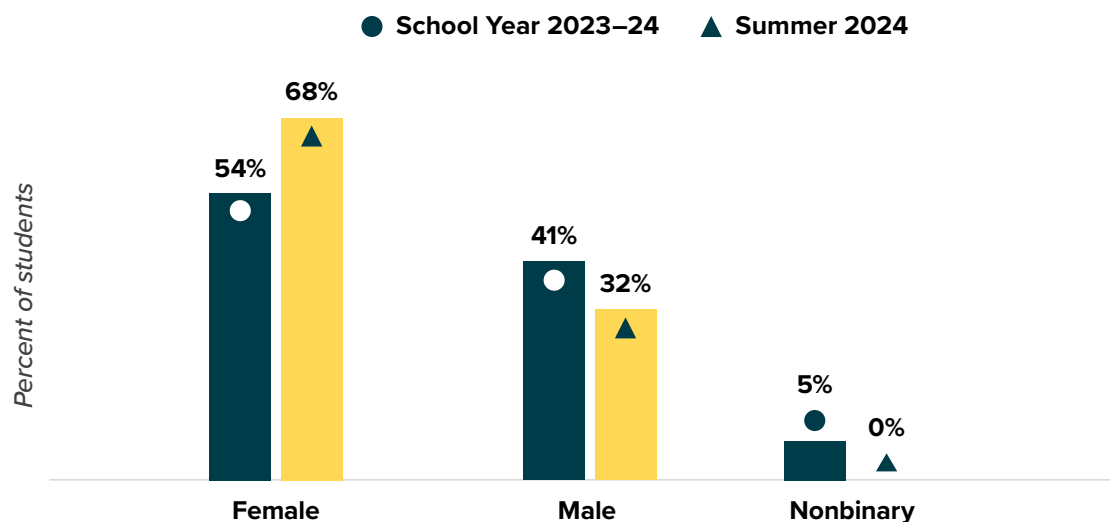
Nineteen students participated in summer 2024.¹ All students participated in both July and August. Eleven percent were post-resident youth.

Compared to students enrolled in the 2023–24 school year program, students participating in the summer program first enrolled in Open Doors at a slightly older age (17.8 compared with 17.5) and with more credits (9.1 compared with 7.4).

The summer population was more likely to be female and identify as Black compared to the 2023–24 school year population (figures 1 and 2). In addition, the summer population was more likely to have had an individualized education program in the high school years before summer 2024 but less likely to have experienced homelessness or been eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (figure 3).

¹ Six students participated in summer 2023. We do not provide findings on these students due to the small sample.

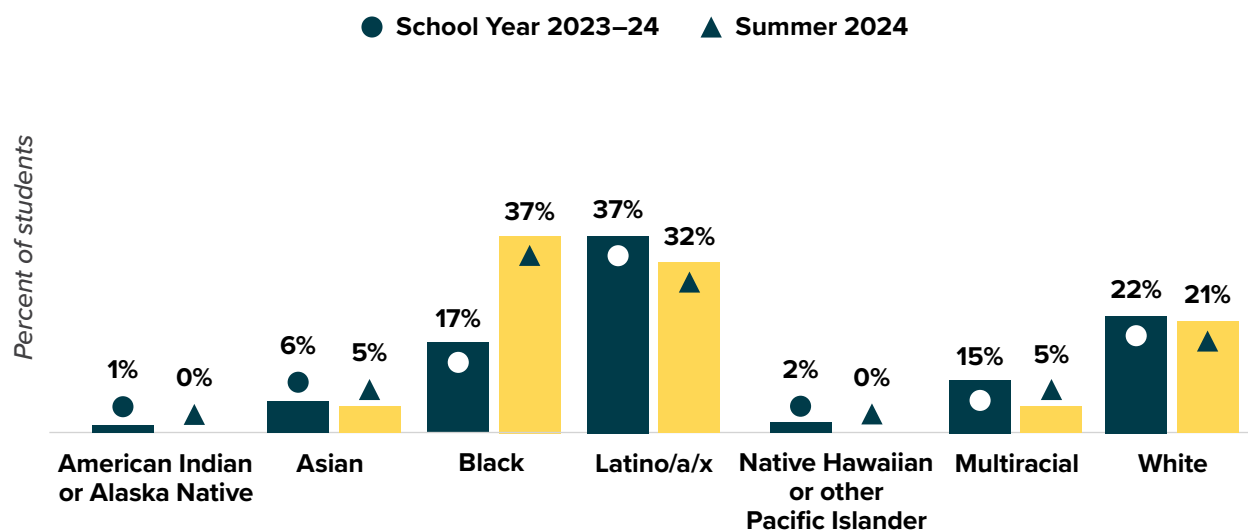
Figure 1. The summer 2024 student population had a higher percentage of female students compared to the 2023–24 school year population



Note: N = 93 for school year and N = 19 for summer.

Source: Evaluation team analysis of Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) data.

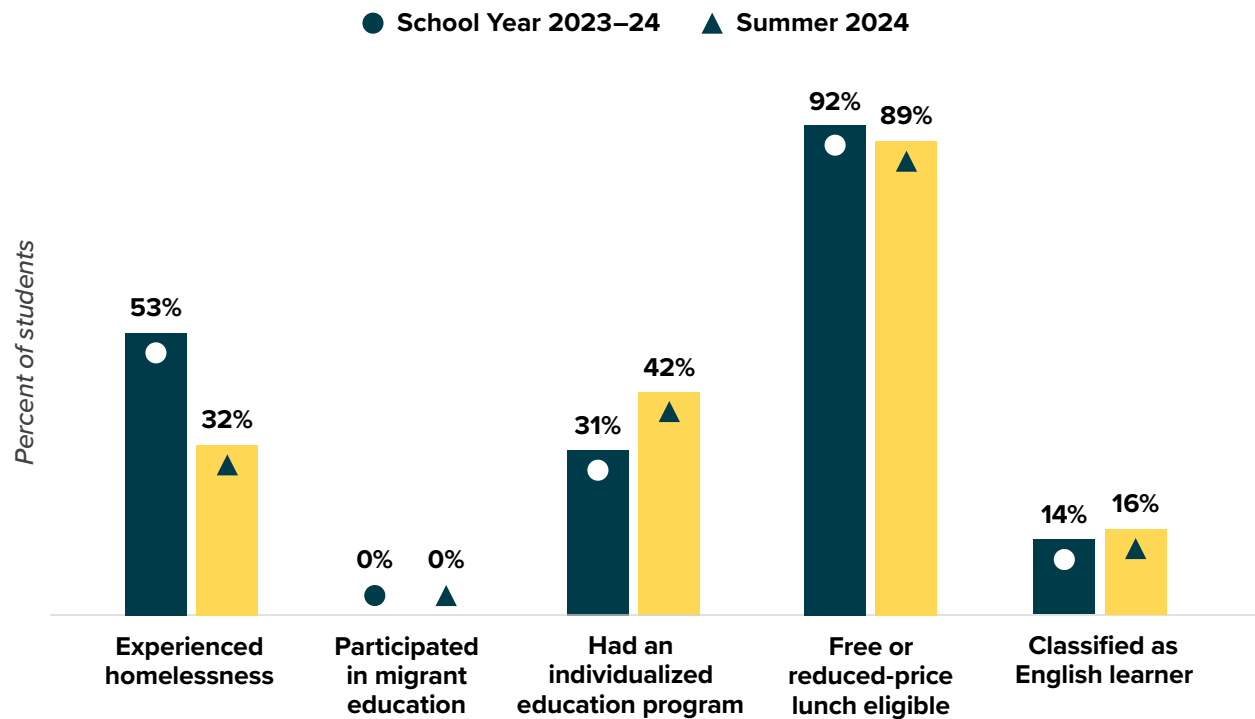
Figure 2. The summer 2024 student population had a higher percentage of students who identified as Black compared to the 2023–24 school year population



Note: N = 93 for school year and N = 19 for summer.

Source: Evaluation team analysis of CEDARS data.

Figure 3. The summer 2024 student population differed in terms of their school experiences compared to the 2023–24 school year population



Note: Data are from 2014–15 to 2023–24 and so span students' upper elementary, middle school, and high school years. N = 93 for school year and N = 19 for summer.

Source: Evaluation team analysis of CEDARS data.

Outcomes

SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT AND CONNECTION TO PROGRAM

Given that the program does not typically operate during the summer, the summer pilot funding enabled the staff to keep working with students who otherwise would not be engaged in school. Staff members shared that four students earned their diploma over the summer who would not have otherwise. Several students were close to graduation and could receive their diploma in September.



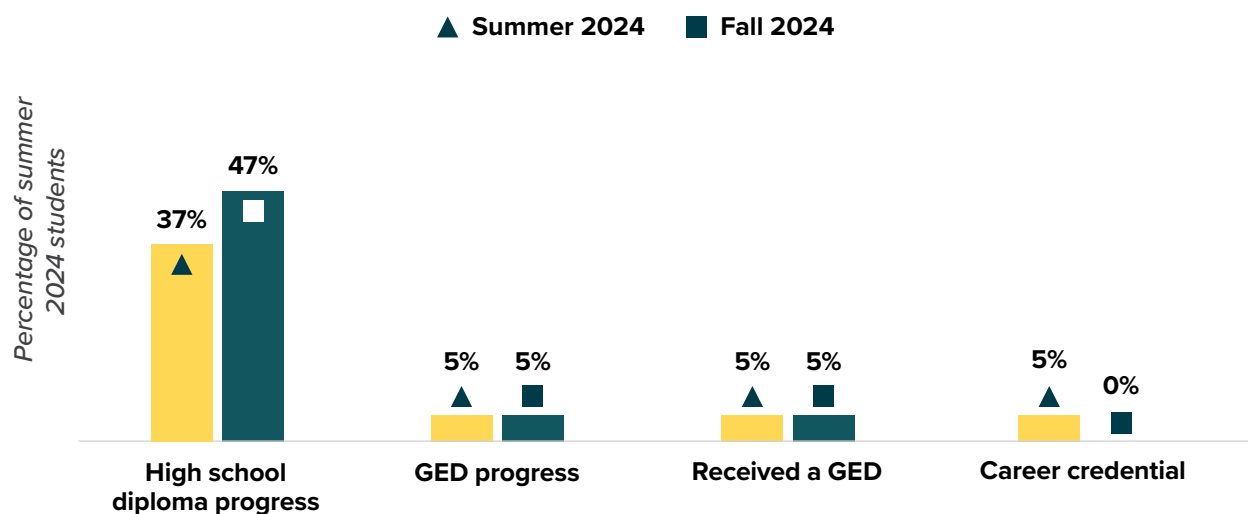
Because they [Interagency Open Doors staff and partners] check up on you, they make sure you are able to get transportation, not only, let's say, you're struggling, because I would have days where I couldn't be present in class. They'd help me talk [myself] into it and distract myself with something good, like learning during class. I thought that was cool. And before I came into this class, I'm not going to lie, I only had one or two friends, but, I don't know, it's just so comfortable where I just kind of made friends with a few people I wouldn't expect to be friends with."

Seattle Interagency student

Student achievement of indicators of academic progress in summer and fall 2024 based on quantitative data

Forty-seven percent of summer 2024 students earned an indicator of academic progress (IAP) in summer 2024 and 53 percent earned an IAP in fall 2024. Over one-third of students worked toward a high school diploma in the summer (37%; figure 4), and that persisted through the fall, with **nearly half of summer participants making academic progress toward their high school diploma in fall 2024**. Additionally, during the summer 5 percent of summer students earned a GED and 5 percent earned an IAP related to career credentials.

Figure 4. Over one-third of students who participated in summer 2024 made high school diploma progress in summer and nearly half made progress in fall 2024



Note: N = 19. IAPs were categorized into high school diploma progress, high school diploma completion, GED progress, GED completion, college academic progress, college credential completion, career progress, and career credential completion. IAP categories are not shown if no students achieved IAPs in that category in either summer or fall 2024. For the categories displayed in this figure, the IAPs that were achieved were:

High school diploma progress: a. Earns at minimum a 0.25 high school credit.

GED progress: f. Passes one or more high school equivalency certificate measures (each measure may only be claimed once per enrolled student), or other state assessment.

Career credential: d. Receives an industry recognized certificate of completion of training or licensing received after completion of a program requiring at least 40 hours of instruction.

Source: Evaluation team analysis of pilot site reporting on summer 2024 and fall 2024 outcomes.

Success factors and challenges

HIGH-INTEREST ACTIVITIES AND INCLUSIVE PROGRAM ENVIRONMENT

Staff members described students as highly engaged in the cosmetology program. Students shared that they did not want to miss a day because every day of the program was interesting. To support regular attendance, Interagency Open Doors staff members and cosmetology program instructors communicated with students often, especially if a student was late or absent. Students described how staff members checked in on them from a place of care, not punishment. Students shared that they enjoyed the mixture of hands-on experience, SEL lessons, and opportunities to gain experience from a variety of professionals in the cosmetology field.



I thought it was going to be 30 kids in a class, all learning, sitting in a desk, writing things down. But no—it was super inclusive, and you just felt comfortable around everybody to be able to share everything. And we could learn about the stuff, learn about the history, and then actually do it right in front of us. And they brought all the tools. I don't even know how they got all of this stuff and got all the money to do this stuff, but it was so, so, so, so cool and an amazing opportunity for all of us young people.”

Seattle Interagency student

“They felt there was a level of comfort and trust that we built with them, and those kids, we are softies, so we loved every last one of them. We were like, ‘We’re going to miss you so much.’”

Seattle Interagency partner

CO-LOCATION AND CROSS-STAFFING WITH JUSTICE-RELATED SYSTEMS

Interagency’s unique program design supported implementation of the summer program. Some Interagency staff members also work at a nearby youth detention facility (the Judge Patricia H. Clark Children and Family Justice Center). Interagency also provides educational services to youth who are incarcerated in King County Jail. This staffing structure can ease transitions for students who are exiting institutional education and enrolling at Interagency.

COMPETING PRIORITIES FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS PRESENTED SOME CHALLENGES

Staff members did note challenges with the summer program. First, some staff members were not available during the summer months. In addition, students who originally signed up to attend either the cosmetology program or the OSHA and flagging certification ended up needing to work and therefore could not participate in the summer programming, which was not a paid opportunity for students.

Blending SEL with career-connected learning

The new Seattle Interagency Open Doors' summer cosmetology program was innovative and aligned with students' interests. By blending SEL lessons with career-connected learning, the program supported students to build relevant career-related skills while reflecting on their lives more broadly. For example, the program taught students about the history of hair through a lesson entitled, Hair is Texture; Life is Texture. In this lesson, instructors taught students about different textures of hair and how this relates to different life experiences.



We started off with a social-emotional lesson, and it really opened up the students and helped them to just dig within and uncover some old ideologies that they may have had about their own hair and talk about life a little bit. And it's so funny, because these kids really went deep in a lot of the conversations, and they created a space for healing, and it was just really supportive."

Seattle Interagency partner

Staff members and partners shared that students were very engaged in the program not only due to an interest in cosmetology but also because of the relationships students formed with the instructors. Many students attended all or most sessions, including several students who struggle with attendance during the school year.



The teachers are just like your friends by themselves. They're super enthusiastic and welcoming and accepting and friendly to everybody. They don't treat anybody differently. They're just really good people, honestly. We're so lucky that we have some really authentic, grown, good people running our program."

Seattle Interagency student

In addition, the program connected students with mentors in various occupations in cosmetology, so students will continue to learn important skills that will prepare them for their future careers.

About this project

Washington state appropriated funds for the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to conduct a summer program pilot with up to 12 [Open Doors Youth Reengagement Programs](#). The funding period spanned the 2023–2025 biennium as outlined in House Bill #5187, Sec. 522. Seattle Interagency participated in the summer 2023 and summer 2024 pilot. OSPI contracted with [Education Northwest](#) to evaluate the Open Doors Summer Pilot. Education Northwest prepared this profile as part of the evaluation.

METHODS

Education Northwest developed this summer pilot program profile from artifact review and interviews/ focus groups in summer 2024 with three Seattle Interagency students, two staff members, and one community partner. We also analyzed quantitative program and student data from OSPI to produce the student demographics and outcomes figures. Thank you to the Seattle Interagency students, program team, and partners for taking the time to share your stories and perspectives about the summer pilot.

Recommended citation

Padden, M., Cigarroa Kennedy, C., Petrokubi, J., & Hodara M. (2025). *Open Doors Summer Pilot site profile: Seattle Interagency*. Education Northwest.

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