



Washington Office of Superintendent of
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REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: Academic, Innovation, and Mentoring (AIM) Program

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Academic, Innovation, and Mentoring (AIM) program is to support community-based youth development organizations that deliver educational services, mentoring, and connection to positive out-of-school time activities for youth ages 6–18. The AIM program was designed to provide targeted academic and social-emotional development interventions during out-of-school time. The Boys & Girls Clubs have been delivering community specific models into place in 14 locations across the state. Each site worked with the local school district to ensure a match with community needs and resources and developed plans to implement a range of evidence-based programming. At the end of the 2024 school year, the combined total of students served reached 535 students. All sites have collected participant demographics and pre-intervention measurements of academic improvement and demonstration of social and emotional skills. Clubs selected different methods to demonstrate improved academic outcomes, but all of them are seeing success with improving math and English language arts (ELA) for students needing additional support.

Using “State Assessment Results” as an indicator:

- 68% of AIM participants improved their results from year-to-year in ELA
- 69% improved year-to-year results in math

For Clubs using “Grades” as an indicator:

- 83% of AIM participants had improvements in ELA
- 80% of AIM participants had improvements in math

For Clubs utilizing “at or above grade level at year end” as an indicator:

- 65% of AIM participants meet the metric in ELA
- 61% of AIM participants meet the metric in math

INTRODUCTION

AIM programming continues to bring measurable value to Club members and Clubs always have interested families who are seeking additional academic and SEL support for their children within Club walls.

The project serves kids with identified barriers to academic achievement, with a minimum of thirty academic tutoring sessions, while incorporating social and emotional learning principles, either as an integrated mentoring/tutoring approach, or as a stand-alone program. All sites have collected participant demographics and pre-intervention measurements of academic and social and emotional development, utilizing a variety of approaches.

BACKGROUND

The AIM program launched in 2015 as a pilot program designed to deliver educational services, mentoring, and connection to positive out-of-school time activities for youth ages 6–18. In 2017, the Legislature established the AIM program in state law to continue supporting community-based youth development organizations providing targeted academic and social emotional development interventions during out-of-school time to improve the academic and life outcomes of students.

The AIM program focuses on students with identified barriers to academic achievement—for example, free and reduced-price lunch eligibility—and provides a minimum of 30 academic tutoring sessions. These incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) principles, either as an integrated mentoring/tutoring approach or as a stand-alone program.

UPDATE STATUS

The 2023–24 AIM year grant set out to serve 535 kids across fourteen Boys & Girls Club organizations. At the end of the year, the Clubs reported serving a total of 597 students, thus increasing planned service by 12%. AIM programming continues to bring measurable value to Club members, and Clubs always have interested families who are seeking additional academic and SEL support for their children within Club walls.

The project serves kids with identified barriers to academic achievement, with a minimum of thirty academic tutoring sessions, while incorporating social and emotional learning principles, either as an integrated mentoring/tutoring approach, or as a stand-alone program. All sites have collected participant demographics and pre-intervention measurements of academic and social and emotional development, utilizing a variety of approaches.

Academic support and mentoring activities continued to be central to the AIM grant in 2023–24 year and were implemented with a variety of approaches across fourteen AIM sites. All Clubs

worked closely with their partnering school district, connecting with teachers, counselors and even principals to ensure that students enrolled in AIM programs in their Clubs received targeted support in both academic and social or emotional arenas.

Every funded site implemented a range of evidence-based academic mentoring programs designed to improve performance in core subjects, provide experiential learning in science and arts, as well as ensure deeper engagement of social and emotional components of academic success. All programs implemented at AIM-funded sites were modeled on basic tenets of evidence-based approach of Project Learn and Power Hour – two Boys & Girls Clubs programs designed to create a positive learning environment for students completing homework and engaging in high-yield afterschool learning activities. Mid-year student evaluations at all sites showed consistent progress towards grade improvement in reading and math, as well as greater levels of engagement with schoolwork by students, expressed feelings of excitement about or enjoyment of school activities, higher levels of optimism about own ability to complete work, and closer interactions and involvement with Club staff, when encountering difficult material or facing a social challenge. 86% of cohort participants were matched directly with adult mentor or tutor. AIM site administrators know that direct mentoring relationships support AIM academic and SEL objectives and 83 realize significant benefits for AIM participants.

Overall, Clubs utilized several strategies to measure participant academic progress. Of those using “State Assessment Results,” Clubs reported that 68% of AIM participants improved their results from year to year in ELA, and 69% improved year-to-year results in Math. Of those using “Grades” as a measure of improvement, Clubs reported that 83% of AIM participants had an improvement in ELA, and 80% of AIM participants had an improvement in Math. Finally, some Clubs utilized “At or Above Grade Level at Year End” as a measure of progress. Clubs in this category reported that 65% of AIM participants meeting this metric in ELA, and 61% participants meeting it in Math. Even for Clubs with reported decreases in outcomes compared to previous years of the grant, the positive side is that overall, the lower income participants improved more compared to their middle-class peers, and in many cases AIM group year-end results outperformed district outcomes in Math and Reading.

AIM sites continued their focus on social and emotional learning and overall mental health and emotional wellbeing promotion in their AIM practices. Additionally, the Clubs are also benefitting from another OSPI-facilitated contract with Boys & Girls Clubs in WA – our Mental Health Promotion Pilot. Trauma-informed care training of all youth-facing staff, as well as the introduction of the Behavioral Support Specialists positions in each Club organization provided additional layers of support for kids’ and teens’ mental health. Like academic measurement, Clubs utilized a variety of approaches to measure SEL progress of AIM participants, including increase/decrease of behavioral referrals, observable SEL behavior standards, and youth surveys with a CASEL-approved tools. Across all methods of measurement, an average of 86% of AIM participants demonstrated improvement in their SEL skills and corresponding positive outcomes in behavior management, a thirteen-point improvement compared to the 2022–23 AIM SEL outcomes.

Table 1: 2023–24 Reported Cohort Demographics

Organization	School District	Total Number of Participants	% Free /Reduced Eligibility	Male	Female	% Person of Color
Boys & Girls Clubs of Bellevue	Bellevue	23	91	10	13	91
Boys & Girls Clubs of Benton/Franklin Counties	Pasco	40	98	20	0	100
Boys & Girls Clubs of King County	Seattle Public Schools	82	70	39	41	71
Boys & Girls Clubs of Lewis County	Chehalis	22	64	9	13	23
Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County	Mount Vernon	58	100	26	32	0
Boys & Girls Clubs of Snohomish County	Snohomish	25	84	14	11	56
Boys & Girls Clubs of South Puget Sound	Lakewood	95	91	34	61	91
Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest WA	Vancouver Public Schools	8	88	29	29	66
Boys & Girls Clubs of Spokane	Spokane	19	100	7	12	42
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Columbia Basin	Moses Lake	35	74	14	21	51
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Lewis Clark Valley	Clarkston	30	69	15	15	13
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Olympic Peninsula	Port Angeles	45	88	0	23	33
Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County	North Thurston	40	70	29	11	48

Organization	School District	Total Number of Participants	% Free /Reduced Eligibility	Male	Female	% Person of Color
	Public Schools					
Boys & Girls Clubs of Whatcom County	Whatcom County Schools	25	72	15	10	48
Totals		597	84%			65%

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

The AIM program continues to deliver targeted support to students identified as needing additional help. In this post-pandemic time that additional support has been more critical than ever. Schools and communities continue to address learning gaps and provide support for student social and emotional wellbeing.

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