

HIGH SCHOOL BRIDGE AT A GLANCE



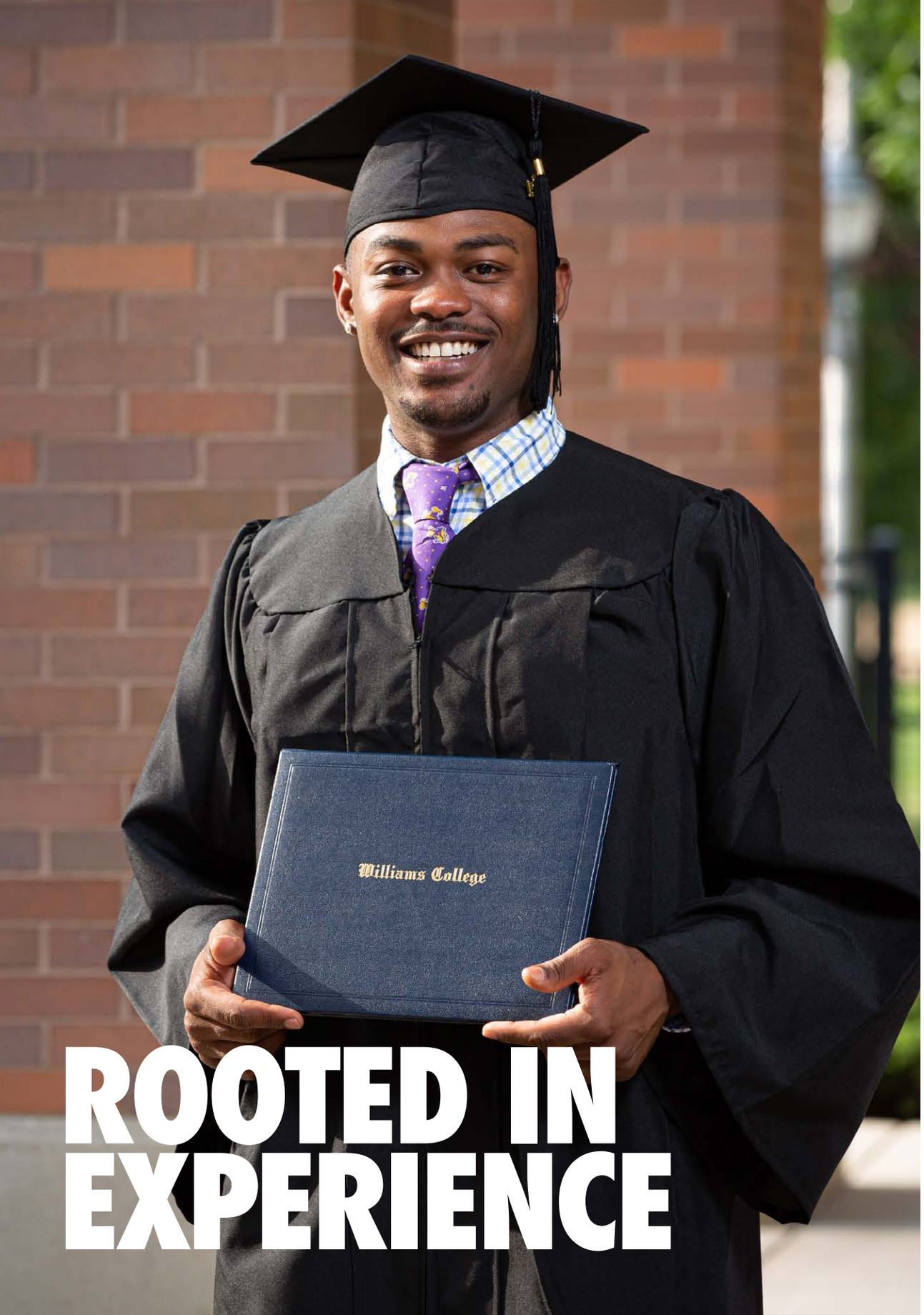
HIGH SCHOOL BRIDGE

Chicago students have the right to a well-resourced high school education, but the placement process is complicated to navigate alone. High School Bridge (HSB) helps students attending elementary schools in communities impacted by systemic disinvestment find and succeed in their best-fit high schools. We advocate for 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th graders and their families as they build the foundation for their success in high school, postsecondary education and the start of their careers.

HSB's Competitive Advantage

With over 500 high schools to choose from in Chicago, the challenge of making the elementary-to-high-school transition can be overwhelming for even the most well-resourced families. The quality of each private, public and charter school varies greatly, and the barriers to enrolling in the most well-resourced schools are steep. After examining the post-secondary outcomes of over 10,000 students in Chicago, we found that students and their families needed targeted support to enroll and persist in their best-fit high schools. Access to well-resourced high school education is especially steep for those who:

- Attend elementary school in historically disinvested and under-resourced communities
- Will be among the first in their family to earn a college degree
- Have GPAs below 3.0 coming out of seventh and eighth grade



ROOTED IN EXPERIENCE

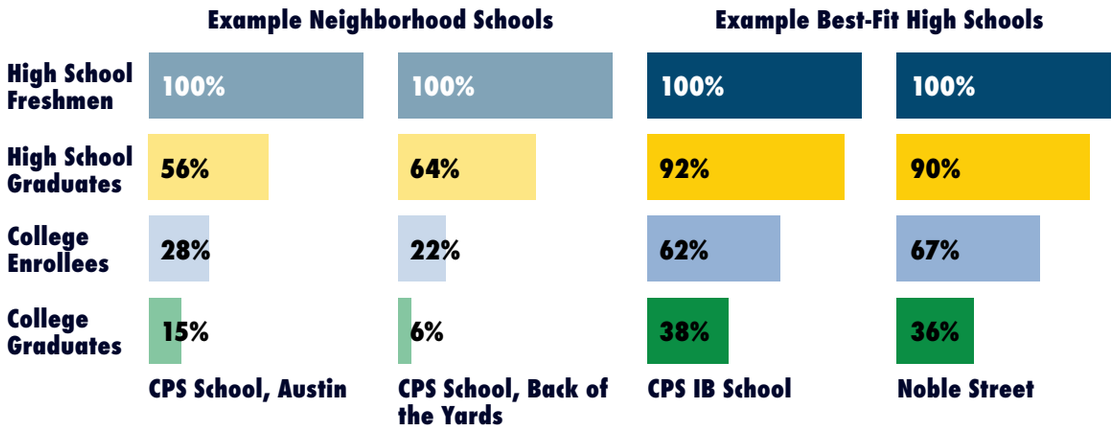
Chicago Jesuit Academy's College & Career Persistence (CP) Office has provided support to our students and alumni for over a decade as they transition to high school, post-secondary programs and the start of their career. Families with greater means are able to use their resources to navigate a complicated high school process which includes test prep, becoming critical consumers of educational outcomes, understanding school resources and navigating multiple application processes and deadlines. Our mission calls us to fill the gap. Specifically, we commit to partnering with other schools and the broader community to create access to better educational resources, confront systemic racism and remove obstacles to educational equity for all families.

93% of CJA's Classes of 2009-2018 graduated from high school in four years and 97% have graduated in five years, which stands in stark contrast to the 58% of Black males who graduated from CPS high schools over the same period. Our lived experience accompanying CJA alumni as they navigate the complicated and changing high school landscape gives us confidence that we are well-positioned to offer high school transition services to even more students and families across Chicago through High School Bridge.

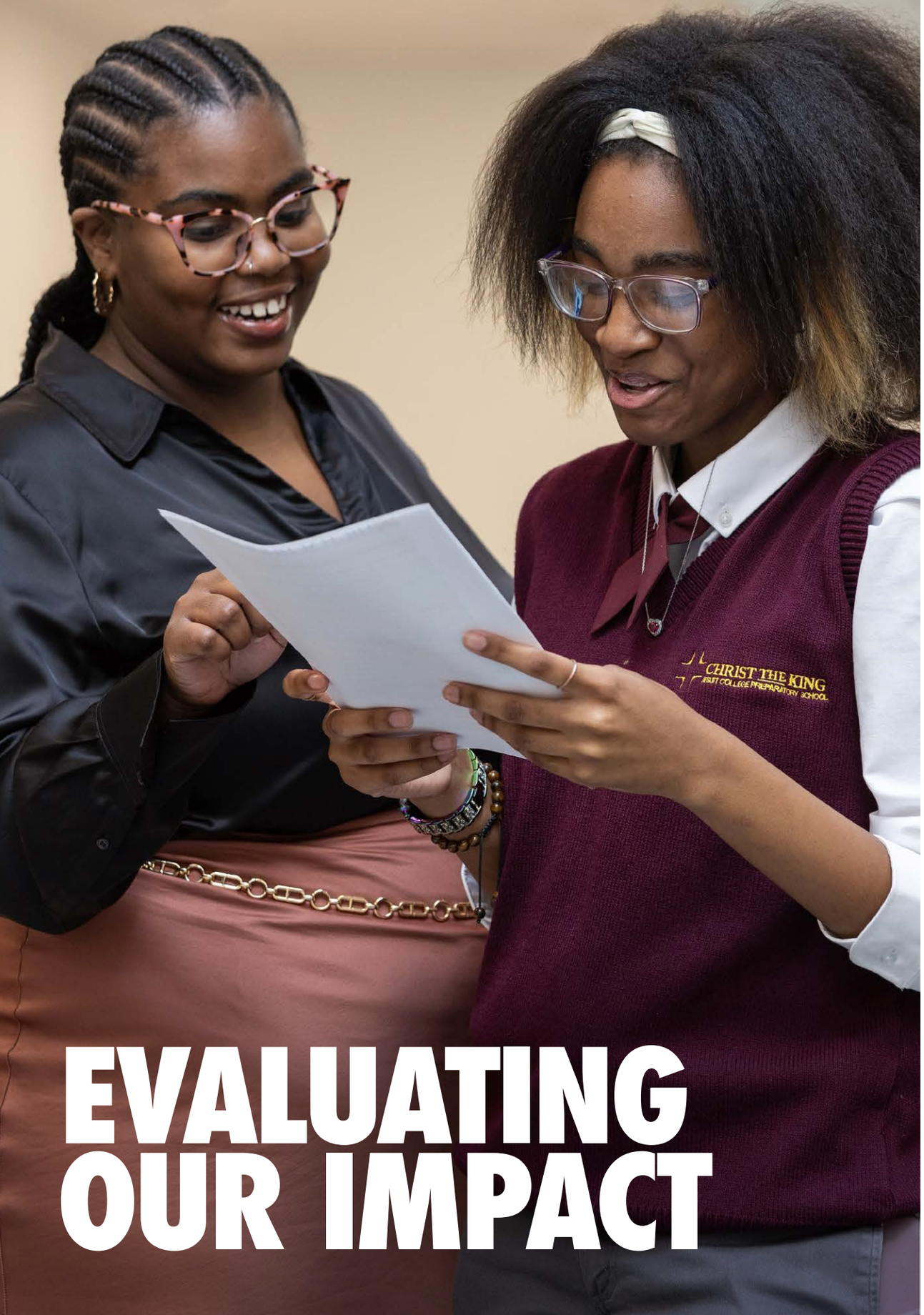
From introducing a family to tools that highlight the difference in outcomes of high schools they are considering, to exposing families to scholarship opportunities at private and boarding schools, to problem-solving transportation obstacles, individual accompaniment of students and families has created the biggest impact for families we support. Our counselors are able to help families identify the most important factors in a best-fit school such as location and commute, class size, student demographics, academic rigor and supports, extracurricular activities, social-emotional support services, and, when applicable, tuition.

Not all schools, especially private schools, publish comprehensive data about these factors, making direct comparisons difficult. In these cases, we lean into the experiences of CJA and HSB alumni to help families make informed choices.

As shown in the graphic below, students enrolled in a best-fit high school like those recommended by HSB have a 2.4-6.7 times greater chance of earning a college degree than students enrolled in their neighborhood CPS schools.



All data from University of Chicago's To&Through Project



EVALUATING OUR IMPACT

Our ultimate goal is to increase postsecondary degree attainment for the students we serve. To measure our near-term progress toward this goal, we will assess our students against the follow metrics:

Goals for 8th Grade

- 95% of 8th-grade graduates will have access to best-fit high schools.
- 90% of 8th-grade graduates will enroll in best-fit high schools.

Goal for 9th and 10th Grade

- HSB Counselors will be in contact with at least 80% of HSB 9th- and 10th-grade students, working with them to meet on-track metrics as defined by the University of Chicago's Network for College Success.

Goal for 10th Grade:

- 75% of High School Bridge students will have access to a highly-qualified post-high-school counselor or outside organization, as evaluated by the HSB Team, by the start of their junior year of high school.

Notre Dame Partnership

High School Bridge has partnered with the University of Notre Dame's Lab for Economic Opportunities (LEO) to examine the near- and long-term outcomes of the HSB intervention. Over the next four years, HSB will expand to work with 19 elementary schools in some of Chicago's most historically disinvested from communities that serve students who would otherwise have little support in their transition to high school and would be at risk of undermatching and attending a less well-resourced or lower performing high school.

LEO's partnership will help us to better understand the impact of HSB by comparing degree attainment and other short-term outcomes for students who receive our services and students from our schools-in-waiting control group. Our team of experienced researchers will be impartial judges and ensure the consistency and quality of our data.

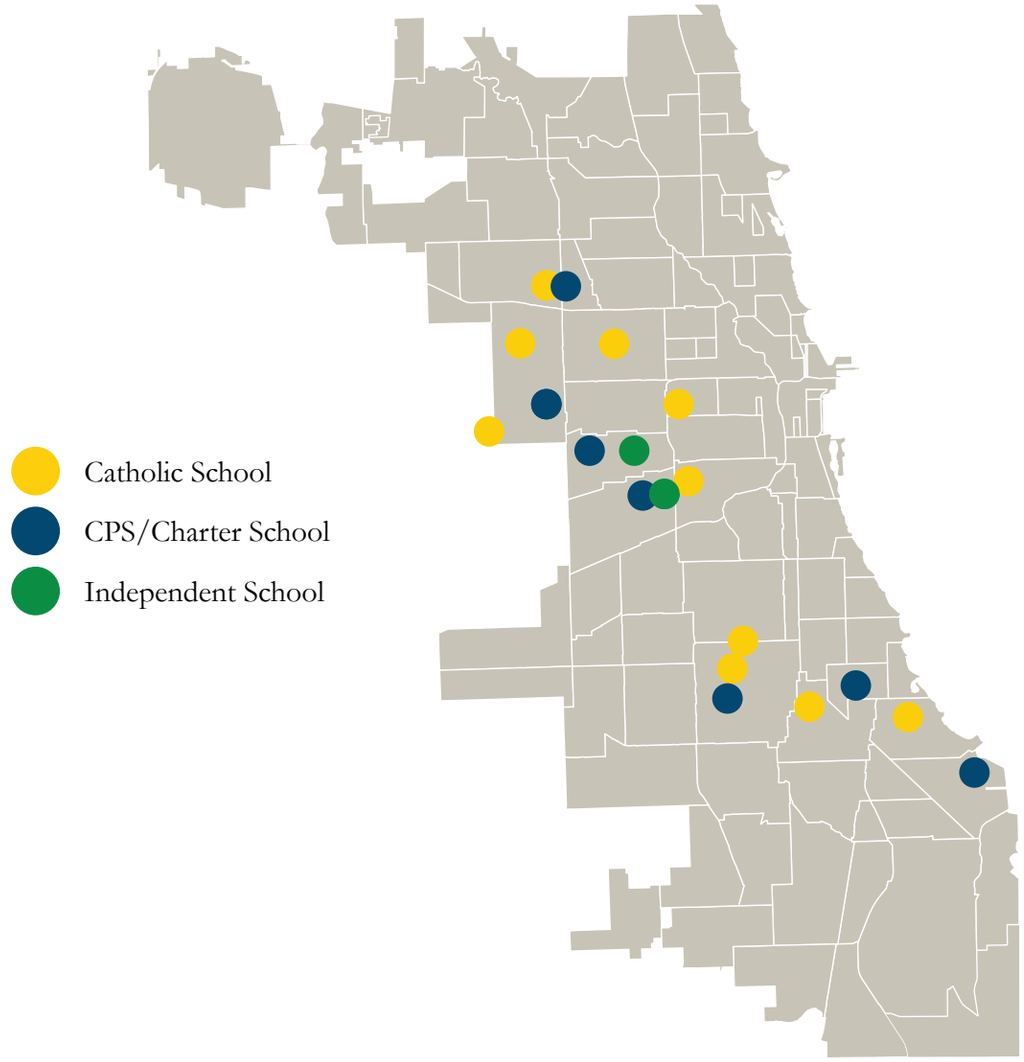
leo Partner
Outsmarting poverty

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME



WHO WE SERVE

By the 2026-2027 academic year, HSB will actively serve approximately 2,000 students annually across 19 elementary schools. On average, we will spend $900 per student at scale, and the program is offered **at no cost to our partner schools**.



Current and Future Elementary School Partners

Catholic Schools

Academy of St. Benedict the African
Augustus Tolton Academy
Maternity BVM
St. Angela
St. Ann
St. Catherine-St. Lucy
St. Genevieve
St. Malachy
St. Philip Neri

CPS/Charter Schools

Chavez MAC
Daniel Webster Elementary School
Great Lakes Academy
Hammond Elementary School
Morton Elementary School
Providence Englewood
Spencer Elementary
Wadsworth STEM

Independent Schools

Altus Academy
Holy Family



OUR MODEL

Finding that "best-fit" school can feel like searching for a needle in a haystack. In the absence of systemic change, the High School Bridge Team offers students and families clear guidance and information about quality education choices so they can make informed decisions in a choice landscape. Our accompaniment through tenth grade helps more first-generation and under-represented students find their paths through high school to post-secondary education, meaningful employment and positions of community leadership.

High School Bridge services span from 7th to 10th grade. Each student and family can opt-in to different pieces of our program, including summer programming.

Seventh Grade

Seventh grade is the most important year for high school applications, and HSB is there to help students make the most of it.

- 7th-grade students begin to have a weekly HSB class.
- Students attend panels on different high school options.
- HSB Counselors run small group lessons to build relationships with students.

Eighth Grade

Eighth graders regularly work one-on-one with their HSB Counselor so that each student applies to and enrolls in a best-fit high school.

- 8th-grade HSB students engage in targeted test prep, college and career exploration, and establish critical executive function skills.
- Each family meets with the HSB Counselor to build a robust high school list and map out next steps in the application process, with regular check-ins throughout the year.
- Students work with their HSB Counselors to revise essays, apply to scholarships, and practice interviews.

Ninth Grade

Ninth-graders meet with their HSB Counselors at their new school to ensure they are settling into their new environment.

- Ninth-graders set goals and work with HSB Counselors to monitor their academic progress and engagement with their new school community.
- Students are eligible to earn gift cards through our A's Pays Program, which incentivizes a strong GPA for more affordable college access.

Tenth Grade

Tenth graders continue to have regular check-ins with their counselor to celebrate when things are going well and to troubleshoot when they are not.

- Counselors work to ensure students have fully adapted and work with families through the transfer process if the school is not the right fit.
- Tenth graders work with HSB to begin planning for their post-secondary programs. HSB Counselors connect students to college counselors or an outside organization that will support their next steps.

HIGH SCHOOL BRIDGE

Mission

High School Bridge (HSB) helps students attending elementary schools in communities impacted by systemic disinvestment find and succeed in their best-fit high schools.

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