2015-2016 Reengagement Census Results: Executive Summary

The following report contains self-reported 2015-2016 school year data from twenty members of the Reengagement Network in 17 states. Top-line findings include:

- Reengagement Network programs reached out to 48,077 disengaged students.
- 24,140 of those students completed the intake process at the center or program.
- Reengagement programs placed 9,474 disengaged students into education programs; these included traditional district or alternative high schools, and GED or adult education programs.
- 6,564 students brought back to education options via systematic reengagement efforts graduated, obtained a high school diploma, or received a high school equivalency diploma during the year.
- Program data show a 70.8 percent aggregate “stick rate,” defined as still enrolled or have completed a credential by July 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sites Reporting</td>
<td>13 of 13</td>
<td>15 of 17</td>
<td>17 of 18</td>
<td>20 of 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Contact</td>
<td>22,409</td>
<td>23,475</td>
<td>23,617</td>
<td>56,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placed</td>
<td>9,528</td>
<td>11,592</td>
<td>13,278</td>
<td>12,319*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduated / Diploma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick Rate</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*T* Technical difficulties barred one large reengagement program from submitting its data in time to include in this summary. As a result, the reported number of students placed decreased significantly from the 2015 Census. Two Network members reported much higher initial contact figures.

Background and Context

Recent reviews of U.S. Census data show more than 5.5 million young people ages 16-24 out of school and out of work, nationwide.\(^1\) An estimated half of those 5.5 million lack a high school diploma.

Reengagement programs across the country reach out and connect with this population of disconnected youth; assess students’ educational and psychosocial needs; provide referrals to best-fit educational options as well as wraparound services; provide support to re-enroll; and provide support to stay enrolled for at least one-year post re-enrollment. Each Reengagement centers and program in the Network customizes an operational model that best meets the needs of the community it serves. The National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute) provides hub staffing for the Network as well as resources at [www.nlc.org/reengagement](http://www.nlc.org/reengagement), thanks to support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

\(^1\) [http://www.measureofamerica.org/disconnected-youth/](http://www.measureofamerica.org/disconnected-youth/)
Program Type
Seventeen reengagement programs submitted data for youth placement into different types of education programs and schools. The 2016 census shows a slight decrease in the percentage of students placed into GED or Adult Education programs and an increase in traditional district and alternative high school placements in comparison to the 2015 Census.

Persistence or “Stick” Rate, and Graduation
Persistence Rate: As in prior years, the 2016 Census asked sites to report on each program’s rate of persistence after reenrollment or “stick rate” -- the percentage of students who persist in or graduate from an education program in the academic year in which they reenroll. This summary, and centers, calculate the rate by placing the total number of students still enrolled at the end of the school year, those who graduated, and those who complete a diploma or equivalent over the total of students who reenrolled in schools because of the reengagement center/program.

The average reported stick rate across eleven sites, representing 6,564 students, came in at 70.8%, very similar to prior years. The median stick rate stood at 67.2%, implying that the aggregate average skewed high as several sites reported very high stick rates. Most sites’ stick rates hover within the 60 to 66 percent range.

Graduation: For the first time, the annual census has produced a picture of how many students receiving reengagement support move through to graduation after reenrollment. Of the 6,564 students reported as making progress in the eleven sites, 516 students received a diploma equivalent and 632 received high school diplomas. The remaining 5,636 students remained enrolled at the end of the 2015-2016 school year.
**Early Stick Rates**

The 2015-16 census also, for the first time, collected information about students’ persistence over the short term after re-enrollment – an “early stick rate.” Some reengagement practitioners use this measure to identify more precisely when persistence issues originate.

Four sites reported data on persistence of nearly 4,000 students, at the 30-, 45-, 60-, and 90-day points after initial reenrollment. For these sites, the first 90 days brought persistence levels near the national average for the whole school year, suggesting a need to front-load supports even more heavily during the first quarter after reenrollment.

Note: Both stick rate calculations place an emphasis on sustained enrollment thanks to reengagement. At present, the rates do not provide a broader picture that would reflect the results of reengagement programs’ efforts to link youth to employment, housing, and other wraparound services.

**Demographics**

For the third year running, the Reengagement Census collected demographic on race and ethnicity, age, as well as grade level and credit accumulation of students placed. These data help round out an understanding of whom the Reengagement Network currently helps.

**Race/Ethnicity**

Relative to the 2014-2015 Census, the latest Census saw an increase in the percentage of Black, White, Multiracial, and other students and a decrease in the percentage of Hispanic/Latino students. The decrease in Hispanic/Latino students appears largely to result from the absence of census figures from one site.
**Age of Youth**
Trends in age of youth at time of placement continued as before with a peak at 18 years of age.

![Age of Youth Chart]

**Gender**
Similar to the 2014-2015 Census findings, this year’s census found significant variation among participation in programs by gender. Among the 15 sites that shared gender information, the ratio of males to females was as high as 3.1 and as low as 0.6 males for every one female.

![Gender Pie Chart]

**Grade Level at Time of Placement**
Ten sites reported students’ grade standing at time of placement and found very little variation from the prior year. For example, a student who spent three years in high school, but who passed only one year of English and one year of math would list as in Grade 9 at time of placement.

![Grade Level Chart]
**Age/Credit Accumulation**

The Census asked sites to report summaries of age and credit accumulation expressed in terms of the matrix of old, young, close and far.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young and close</td>
<td>Under 18 years of age, graduation possible within one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young and far</td>
<td>Under 18 years of age, two or more years off-track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old and close</td>
<td>Over 18 years of age, graduation possible within one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old and far</td>
<td>Over 18 years of age, two or more years off-track</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The six sites that collect these data reported that more than half of all youth placed, 46.8%, fall into the “old and far” category, a decrease of 4.7 percentage points from 2015. These six reengagement programs reported placement of five percent less “old and close” students.

Overall participation in the Young and Close and Young and Far categories barely shifted.

![Age & Credit Accumulation](image)

**Methodological Note**

The findings presented above represent totals of the data reported by reengagement sites for the 2015-2016 academic year, by category. Not all sites submitted disaggregated data for each indicator; therefore, the summary of data for each indicator reflects different sample sizes. In some cases, the variance in availability of disaggregated data makes it difficult to identify trends across the full Reengagement Network.

**Author**

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Reengagement Sites Reporting, 2015-2016:

- Allentown, Pennsylvania: Allentown ReEngagement Center, Allentown School District, Communities in Schools, and the Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board
- Boston, Massachusetts: Reengagement Center, Boston Private Industry Council
- Brockton, Massachusetts: Pathways Center Dropout Prevention & Re-Engagement Program, Brockton Public Schools
- Chicago, Illinois: Student Outreach and Reengagement Center (S.O.A.R.), Chicago Public Schools
- Dayton, Ohio: Fast Forward Center, Sinclair Community College
- Des Moines, Iowa: Des Moines Public Schools Reengagement, Des Moines Public Schools
- Dubuque, Iowa: Re-Engage Dubuque, Dubuque Community Schools
- King County, Washington: King County Reengagement Provider Network
- Los Angeles, California: YouthSource Centers, Los Angeles Unified School District & City of Los Angeles
- Minneapolis, Minnesota: We Want You Back, Minneapolis Public Schools
- New York City, New York: Referral Centers for High School Alternatives, NYC Department of Education
- Omaha, Nebraska: D2 Center
- Phoenix, Arizona: Reengage Phoenix, College Depot, Burton Barr Central Library
- Portland, Oregon: Reconnection Center, Portland Public Schools
- St. Paul, Minnesota: Project Return, Saint Paul Public Schools / St. Paul Children’s Collaborative
- Tucson, Arizona: Youth on the Rise, United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona
- Washington D.C.: DC Reengagement Center, Office of the State Superintendent of Education
- Washoe County, Nevada: Re-Engagement Center, Washoe County School District
- Colorado: Colorado Youth for a Change, Multiple Districts

Map of Reporting Sites: