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Barriers for Pseudo School District's College Bound Scholars' Scholarship Attainment

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of the
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Barriers to College Bound Scholarship Attainment

Completing high school and entering into post-secondary schooling is essential as more than two-thirds of all jobs in the United States will require a post-secondary degree or certification in 2018 (Lumina Foundation). To meet the 2025 need for skilled workers, colleges and universities will need to produce an additional 20 million post-secondary educated workers (Carnevale & Rose, 2011), at a time when 81% of the nation's students are graduating from high school (www.ed.gov) and 69.2% of the class of 2015 enrolled in college or university (www.bls.gov/news.release/hsgec.nr0htm).

The gap between low-income students and their peers is growing. Students from low socioeconomic status (SES) families are more underrepresented in post-secondary education than that of their [high SES] peers (Walpole, 2003). Low SES students are greatly hindered in securing adequate financial resources for the rising costs of post-secondary education (Wilt, 2006).

The College Bound Scholarship (CBS) is a Washington State program which assists low SES students with funding post-secondary education. CBS commits financial assistance towards college tuition, books, and fees as a means of increasing post-secondary education access for low SES students. Students are determined to be low SES as a result of their enrollment in the federally assisted National School Lunch Program in the 7th or 8th grade (<http://www.wsac.wa.gov/college-bound>).

CBS is intended to be an incentive to low SES students who meet and maintain income, academic, and good citizenship eligibility requirements. CBS students pledge to (a) graduate from a Washington high school with a grade point average of 2.0 or higher, (b) commit no felonies and (c) enroll in post-secondary education within one year of graduation. By (d)

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completing a yearly Free Application for Federal State Aid (FAFSA) and (e) maintaining satisfactory academic progress as outlined by their college of choice, CBS students retain their scholarship for up to four years (<http://www.wsac.wa.gov/college-bound>).

Since the inception of CBS in 2007, more than 187,000 students have participated and high school graduation rates of CBS students are 15-19 percent higher than the rates of their low SES peers not enrolled in CBS (Washington Student Achievement Council: On the Road to College, 2012). While the number of students enrolled as 7th and 8th graders in CBS increases each year, the number of students meeting the scholarship requirements as seniors has declined, as well as the number of CBS recipients, students who meet the scholarship requirements but do not access the funds to pursue post-secondary education. In the Class of 2014 cohort, 20,747 students enrolled in CBS, 11,946 students met the CBS scholarship requirements and only 4,782 students received funds upon enrollment in post-secondary education (Kara Larson, Data Analyst for the Washington Student Achievement Council, personal communication, November 9, 2015). Currently, the Washington Student Achievement Council is partnering with the GATES Foundation to research barriers and supports needed for CBS recipients, students who meet the scholarship eligibility requirements, but do not access scholarship funds by enrolling in post-secondary education (Sarah Weiss, personal communication, June 27, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

While 100 Washington school districts met or surpassed the student enrollment benchmark, Pseudo School District was not among them (<http://www.wsac.wa.gov/college-bound>). PSD Class of 2014 had 395 CBS scholars enrolled, however, only 83 were recipients of the scholarship funds (Kara Larson, Data Analyst for the Washington Student Achievement Council, personal communication, November 9, 2015). Furthermore, in the PSD, nearly 25% of

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CBS Class of 2015 seniors were academically ineligible and nearly 50% of CBS seniors had not yet filed their 2015-2016 FAFSA when this study started.

Pseudo School District is a suburban school district with over 20,000 students of which 35.3% receive free or reduced-price meals and 62.7% are white (www.reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us). In the spring of 2014, PSD graduated 84.6% of their students (www.reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us), however, 49% of low-income students enrolled in college the following fall as compared to 69% of their non-low income peers (www.k12.wa.us/dataadmin/performanceindicators/postsecondaryenrollment.aspx). Pseudo School District was selected as a local Puget Sound district whose demographic population has remained consistent in terms of the number of low-income students and the 20% gap between low-income and non-low income students enrolling in college from 2010 to 2014.

This study will identify academic barriers Pseudo School District's CBS students face in meeting the scholarship eligibility requirements and recommend systemic student supports needed to meet academic requirement of the scholarship. Academic trends, course success and failure, and course tracking (type of courses taken) are data readily available within each school district to analyze their effectiveness at meeting the needs of College Bound Seniors.

Completion rates for the FAFSA will also be discussed regarding current seniors; however, historical data is not available. The third requirement, regarding felony convictions, will not be discussed in this study as the school district does not have access to that data set. The fourth requirement, enrollment in post-secondary opportunities, will also be discussed; however, at this time there is not a pipeline for districts to receive student specific enrollment in post-secondary educational opportunities data.

Rationale

Students of low SES families commonly experience effects of at-risk educational health, such as frequent absences from school, lower vocabulary levels and higher suspension rates (Wadsworth, et al., 2008) and are more likely than their non-low SES peers to drop out of school (Finn, 2006). The educational attainment gap increases between low SES students and their peers, as they face the financial barrier of attending post-secondary education. In 2013, students from high income families were nearly 8 times more likely than students from low-income families to obtain a bachelor's degree by age 24 (Cahalan & Perna, 2015), while the number of jobs which require post-secondary education has doubled over the last 40 years (Wu, 2014).

In addition to the need-based grant programs provided by the federal government, at the state level, merit-based programs were also created to support low SES student enrollment in post-secondary education opportunities. The College Bound Scholarship was intended to incentivize low SES students to complete high school and go on to post-secondary education with a promise of tuition assistance, provided the scholarship requirements were met (Washington Student Achievement Council, 2014). Access and opportunity to attend post-secondary education enhances low SES students' ability to move socio-economically as jobs require more skilled workers, pay accordingly, and lead to greater lifetime earnings (Wu, 2014). However, low SES students struggle to meet program requirements and receive this assistance as they are less likely to be enrolled in academically rigorous coursework and maintain the required grade point average (Thaden, 2004).

Beyond increased individual earning potential and upward movement in socio-economic class, post-secondary educational attainment benefits society as a whole through lowered reliance on federal and state assistance programs (Baum, Kuros & Ma, 2013). Other benefits of

post-secondary educational attainment include the decreased likelihood of becoming a teen parent, lower divorce rate, and increased political awareness.

The benefits of post-secondary education are clearly outlined (Baum, Kuros & Ma, 20013; Mirowsky & Ross, 2002; Wu, 2014) and CBS provides financial assistance in addition to other federal, state and college aid for tuition, however, only 20% of PSD CBS students are fulfilling the requirements of the scholarship program, thus are eligible for tuition assistance.

Theoretical Framework

In this study, I used Social Capital Theory (SCT) to frame the issues under investigation. This theory creates a resource for action by increasing face-to-face interactions and social networking to improve attainment of common goals and collective benefit (Kreuter & Lezin, 2012). The use of social capital builds upon the relations between and among persons to address inequities between privileged and non-privileged groups (Bourdieu, 1986).

Social capital refers to the resources which people gain access to through relationships and networks. Social capital creates bonds in relationships to bridge resources which are beyond immediate family environments and alleviate the impact of an adverse environment which lack college-going knowledge (Ambrosino, Hefferman & Shuttlesworth, 2005). Students from low SES families are often first-generation college students whose parents lack the familiarity with the importance of high school curriculum selection and the “college knowledge” needed to select the right college for their student, apply for college, and receive financial aid (Falcon, 2015). Social capital in a school context refers to the vested relationships between students and school personnel. A vested relationship which moves beyond that of supervision and instruction, will return more positive academic, emotional, and behavioral outcomes for students (Dufur, Parcel

& McKune, 2008). School counselors may create a vested relationship by meeting with College Bound Scholars monthly to check in on academic progress, home environment, and goals.

I considered two operational levels of social capital: bonding and bridging. Bonding social capital leads to the formation and capacity building of like groups (Szreter, 2000). Geys & Murdoch (2010) assert that bridging social capital links the oppressed and marginalized group to the networks of their non-marginalized peers from which they had previously been divided or denied access. Increasing the social capital of low SES students to meet CBS eligibility requirements, will create access to funding and attainability of post-secondary education.

Bonding and bridging social capital are closely linked, where bonding social capital must first be formed as a “necessary antecedent” to develop bridging social capital (Larsen et al, 2004). Bonding social capital fosters relationships between low SES students and district personnel, while bridging social capital creates the impetus to “get ahead” and reduce inter-group status inequalities (de Souza Briggs, 2003) by increasing access to post-secondary education.

Lin (1999) outlined social capital as a set of three structured resources to be mobilized: a) resources embedded within a social structure, b) accessibility to social resources by individuals, and c) mobilization of resources by individuals for purposive actions. By creating social capital through institutional relationships (student↔staff), resilience is strengthened when low SES students are confronted with barriers (Liou & Chan, 2008). Stanton-Salazar’s study (2001) purported students-in-need being supported when resources are introduced to meet academic and emotional needs such as mentoring, academic tutoring and counseling.

Social Capital Theory provides the theoretical framework for this study as a means of increasing bonding social capital of CBS students to build meaningful connections with school staff and increasing bridging social capital and gain access to college going knowledge, typically

associated with higher SES, to increase the opportunity and access to post-secondary education (Kreuter & Lezin, 2002).

Research Question

The first priority of this project was to determine the academic barriers which prevented CBS students from meeting the scholarship requirements. This priority focused on bridging social capital, the knowledge to take academically rigorous coursework to prepare a college ready transcript and complete college entrance requirements, to narrow the social inequalities between low SES students and high SES students attaining post-secondary education enrollment. The second priority was to recommend a systemic structure of support using bonding social capital, to create meaningful relationship between student-student and student-staff, to meet the needs of CBS students to fulfill scholarship requirements. For the purpose of this study, the following research question guided the work:

How can Pseudo School District provide systemic support to College Bound Scholar students to meet academic eligibility requirements and increase low-income students' access to post-secondary education?

Literature Review

Social Capital Theory in Education

The social capital deficiency of students from low SES families furthers the social inequity gap as they lack awareness of resource availability (Stanton-Salazar, 1997) and encounter formidable barriers to post-secondary education attainment. In particular, their disadvantage perpetuates itself in low academic performance and post-secondary education attainment stemmed from uninformed high school course choices and knowledge deficit of the college enrollment process. Middle and upper socioeconomic families are more aware of

available resources in social structures, such as which courses to take and scholarship opportunity, than low economic status parents (Horvat, Weininger, & Lareau, 2003).

By leveraging social capital in schools, such as a vested relationship with a school counselor, administrator, or teacher, students can draw on schools' structures, people, and influence to accomplish the goal of post-secondary education attainment (de Souza Briggs, 1998). The expectation and enrollment practices support for post-secondary education, along with access to rigorous course work further enables low socioeconomic students to navigate the systems necessary to complete high school and go on to post-secondary education (Plank & Jordan, 2001).

Need for Connectedness and Supports

Students in low SES homes lack the opportunity and resources to attain similar knowledge and access to resources as that of their high-SES peers and the pursuit of post-secondary education. Students living in poverty often experience unstable living conditions and communities and need a system of supports, and people to help them navigate the path to post-secondary education. Low SES students lack guidance in applying for colleges and financial aid, as they are often the first generation in their family to attend college (Wu, 2014). Life in poverty may be overcome by obtaining a college education, however this population faces barriers at each access point to post-secondary education, from resources for test preparation to finding the college of best fit, and is underrepresented at institutions of higher education (Beegle, 2003).

Students living in poverty need access to academic counseling, test preparation resources, and workshops for application writing and submitting financial aid applications. Perceived cost barriers inhibit low SES students from applying to colleges and taking required entrance exams, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). A student should be able to turn to any adult, such

as a counselor, teacher, parent volunteer) in the school and receive guidance to help mitigate these misconceptions and provide financial literacy awareness in regard to the affordability of post-secondary education (Wu, 2014).

Low SES students may not seek these connections with school personnel for guidance and support (Hynes, 2014) to close this opportunity gap. However, when these bonding social capital connections are made, students are more apt to pursue their goals (Center for Promise, 2015). Bonding social capital connections must be stable and provide students an in depth and trusted relationship from which to draw upon for resources. This relationship must provide consistent support, much like that of mentorship in order to be of benefit (Center for Promise, 2015). In the Center for Promise's report, *Don't Quit on Me*, the authors stated that while all relationships matter, the intensity, intentionality and specialization of support, provided by a relationship, are of greatest need to students facing instability (Center for Promise, 2015).

College Bound Scholarship Evaluation Report

In December 2013, the Baker Evaluation, Research, and Consulting Group (BERC) conducted a study of the first cohort of CBS students to identify trends, variables, and specific data points to determine which correlate to college success (BERC, 2013). The College Success Foundation (CSF) is responsible for outreach across the state and connects regional officers to school support personnel at the middle schools, high schools and colleges in Washington State. One distinct finding of the BERC group indicated the struggle CSF regional officers expressed in making connections with school personnel at the high school level.

The researchers identified 10 high schools to study, five with the highest number of CBS students using the scholarship and five high schools that did not have a significant number of students using the scholarship. The schools with the higher rate of college attendance were

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found to have been more intentional in their support of CBS students and provided multi-tiered and multi-access points both at the middle and high school level. Students were provided a variety of activities to support college preparation, such as assistance looking and applying for scholarships, college applications and FAFSA, college campus visits, taking rigorous academic schedules, developing study skills and mentoring. These schools also had school personnel and students who were better able to articulate the scholarship requirements or knew the contact person for more information (BERC, 2013).

An online survey was given to 1,107 students who had completed the CBS application overall and additional interviews and focus groups for students and school personnel were conducted at the 10 selected sites. School personnel identified lack of school leadership support for CBS, competing initiatives, and culture of resistance and belief in low-income students' college attendance as primary barriers. Students reported they were not fully prepared for the rigors of college and needed more academic support as well as high school to college transition support (BERC, 2013).

The BERC study also focused on the impact participation in CBS had on college enrollment. CBS students had a higher rate of completing college entrance requirements (grade point, courses taken, SAT/ACT scores) than that of their non-CBS free/reduced lunch peers. CBS scholars were also 2.19 times more likely to enroll in college than their non-CBS free/reduced lunch peers and 1.22 times as likely as their non-free/reduced lunch peers (BERC, 2013).

In schools with the lower rate of CBS students accessing the scholarship, students cited lack of continued support from middle school to high school (BERC, 2013). However, CBS students who participated in a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program,

Navigation 101, in high school were 1.38 times more likely to enroll in college directly after high school than CBS students not enrolled in Navigation 101. Navigation 101 focuses on college and career readiness supports through course selection, goal setting, career and post-secondary education planning. Other college awareness and preparation programs listed by students interviewed included AVID, GEAR UP, Upward Bound, Achieving a College Education and TRIO, however limited numbers of students had access to these programs (BERC, 2013).

Preparing Low SES Students for Post-Secondary Opportunities

Supporting low SES students to prepare for and attain post-secondary education attainment requires a web of supports. Sixty-four percent of low SES students complete college bound course sequences, as opposed to 80% of their high SES peers (Bromberg & Theokas, 2016). College entrance requirements are not met when students do not register and complete high school courses such as foreign language, a science sequence of Biology and Chemistry or Physics, and Algebra II or upper level mathematics courses. Students are then caught in a gap between meeting graduation requirements, but not college entrance requirements. Without knowledge and access to a college bound sequence of courses, students lack the support to bridge that gap (Temple, 2009). School personnel must forge connections for the purpose of understanding post-high school goals and provide academic counseling to ensure students are able to take a course sequence which qualifies for college admittance and support the finance planning and enrollment process.

Federal, state and district resources have been provided to varying degrees to support low-SES students enroll in post-secondary opportunities. In the sections that follow, I will highlight three federally funded programs, one state initiative program, as well as a non-profit

organization which created social capital networks of support for the purpose of increased post-secondary educational attainment for students in low-income families.

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. The United States Department of Education Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) follows students from sixth grade through college. The purpose of GEAR UP is to increase the number of low-income minority students in higher education and provide wraparound services to students such as mentoring and outreach activities, such as information nights for FAFSA, scholarship and other relevant strategies. Students are counseled individually and in groups by school personnel, exposed to financial aid workshops, provided opportunities to visit higher education campuses, and hear from guest speakers of college outreach offices. Professional development activities are also provided to teachers to support GEAR UP goals and parent partnerships developed through counseling, post-high school planning workshops, and school events.

In the fall of 2006, 46 percent of low-income GEAR UP scholars enrolled in college as compared to the national enrollment of 34 percent of low SES students (Wu, 2014). In 2008, a final report on the *Early Outcomes of the GEAR UP Program* was published. This report highlighted the program's successes for students and parents attending a GEAR UP school. GEAR UP parents and students were more knowledgeable of the benefits and opportunities of post-secondary education, parental involvement in their student's education increased, and students accessed more academically rigorous courses than non-GEAR UP schools' parents and students (Standing, Judkins, Keller, & Shimshak, 2008).

GEAR UP created bonding social capital using partnerships between the student and family to the school district, local businesses and institutions of higher education, to support

cohorts of students and their families. By providing services for academic assistance, post-secondary information and application, and guidance for course sequence completion, GEAR UP bridged the knowledge gap for low income, minority students to complete high school with a college ready transcript and provide a network of support to facilitate successful enrollment, financial and admissions processes, which led to an increase in the targeted subgroup's post-secondary enrollment (Standing et al, 2008).

Upward Bound. Upward Bound is a federally funded program designed to increase opportunities for students who are low income, first generation and/or living in rural areas. Upward Bound focuses on a two-pronged bonding social capital approach, through a summer program for students to take college prep courses on a college campus and weekly check and connects, a structured conversation with a staff member at the beginning and end of each week throughout the school year. Upward Bound continues to create a network of school-based supports and outside agency support, such as professional tutoring or work-study partnerships, which provide low-income students with critical connections to resources and may include tutoring, counseling, cultural enrichment, and financial and economic literacy (www.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html).

According to the United States Department of Education's April 2004 report, nearly 52,000 students participate in 727 Upward Bound projects; this program is one of the longest running federal programs designed to support underrepresented students attain post-secondary education (Myers, Olsen, Seftor, Young, & Tuttle, 2004). Students enroll in Upward Bound in the 9th grade and may continue receiving support through the summer after their graduation. The author of the report defined groups as having higher or lower educational expectations as measured by whether a student expected to obtain a bachelor's degree post-high school.

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Participation in the Upward Bound program, increased the number of credits earned in high school core academic subjects, especially in mathematics and foreign language by students.

Upward Bound students also increased the number of honors and Advanced Placement course credits as well. With the increase in academic achievement in high school courses and creating a college ready transcript Upward Bound students, who were identified as having lower educational expectation, also increased the number students attending four-year colleges and universities, from 18 to 38 percent (Myers et al, 2004 and Walsh, 2011).

C5 Georgia Youth Foundation. Cook (2014) conducted a limited study of C5 Georgia Youth Foundation, a college access program to support low SES students' acceptance to college and financial assistance. The C5 program creates and nurtures students who are: a) character driven, b) community focused, c) challenge ready, d) college bound, and e) committed to a better future. The C5 program serves student from 8th to 12th grade and hosts a variety of activities throughout the school year and summer, such as summer camps, college tours, service projects and leadership training. While this program served low SES youth, it does not serve all low SES youth. Each year, a new cohort of fifty 8th graders join the program; these students are identified in 7th grade, show high leadership capability and have a family income of less than \$10,000 per family member. C5 requires students to maintain a 2.5 grade point average, attendance at four C5 events per year, completion of 250 hours of community service and participate in summer programs. Ninety percent of C5 students continue in the program each year and the Classes of 2013 and 2014 have 100% high school graduation rates and college acceptance rates (www.c5georgia.org). Cook found in her study, five themes emerged from participant and stakeholder interviews as bonding and bridging social capital being provided by C5. The five themes are creation of a support network to facilitate success, building of resilience through

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experiential learning, providing students with critical connections, promoting college readiness, and producing college-qualified students. A support network was created by building bonding capital and relational support to face barriers and build resiliency to adapt and respond to adverse life situations. Critical connections were formed between students and key people who were influential in acquiring college-going knowledge, such as admission officers and community members who had attended college or could later act as a reference or donor depending on student need. College readiness and college-qualified students were produced by increasing exposure to college campuses, college life and environment, and creating a college plan to follow, provide academic monitoring, and access to tutoring and standardized assessment test prep materials.

Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID). AVID is a non-profit organization which provides a professional development model for administrators and staff to bring research-based curriculum and strategies to schools. AVID provides training in proven practices to prepare all students, especially underrepresented students in higher education, for success in high school, college, and career (www.avid.org/what-is-avid.ashx).

AVID focuses efforts for improving student outcomes in four major domains: a) instruction, b) systems, c) leadership, and d) culture. AVID is a program which is adopted by schools first as an elective course for a subgroup of students and then expands to school wide practices. Districts and schools evaluate current systems, data collection and analysis, professional learning needed and student and family outreach to ensure college readiness access, opportunity, and attainment. School leadership creates a system of beliefs and behaviors, building a culture aimed at increasing the number of students meeting college readiness requirements (www.avid.org/avid-schoolwide.ashx).

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Depending on the district, students can enroll in AVID elementary as early as kindergarten to learn note taking, organization and collaboration skills. Typically, schools enroll students in AVID Secondary, aimed at students in grades 7-12 for the AVID elective course. Enrollment for the elective course targets students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education and may also be the first in the family to attend college, who are performing in the academic middle, students who earn B, C, and even D grades and often move through the education system without positive or negative recognition (www.avid.org/faqu.ashx). Enrolling in the AVID elective course, requires students to enroll in more rigorous courses such as Advanced Placement, and provides organizational and study skills, critical thinking and questioning skills, and academic support in the form of tutoring, enrichment and motivational activities. Families with students in the AVID elective course also participate in family workshops to receive support in financial planning for post-secondary education as well as connect with the AVID elective teacher.

Forty-eight states and 16 countries provide AVID courses to approximately 4,800 elementary, middle, and high schools (www.dodea.edu/Curriculum/AVID). In 2013, the National Student Clearinghouse reported that 68% of 2010 AVID seniors were enrolled in college the fall semester following graduation (National Student Clearing House, 2013). These students, which were traditionally underrepresented in higher education, matched the national average for college enrollment of their non-AVID peers.

In each of the programs described above, bonding and bridging social capital played a pivotal role in the success of low-SES students enrolling in post-secondary educational opportunities (Table 1, *Comparison of Social Capital and Reviewed Programs*). Bonding social capital was created with each program's cohort of students upon enrollment in the program.

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Enrolled students were counseled together, given like classes, and attended school events hosted specifically to target skills and knowledge gap between low-SES students and their families and their peers. Low-SES students and their families were connected to resources and relationships that would help bridge the knowledge and financial gap between themselves and their non-low-SES peers to enroll in post-secondary education. The programs exposed students to learning opportunities such as campus visits, campus workshops, and academic tutoring services; supports which might not otherwise have been possible in their families.

Research Methods

For the purpose of this research project, the researcher used the qualitative method of focus group interviews with student participants and an electronic survey with counselor participants to explore perceptions of barriers and needed supports for the purpose of meeting academic (2.0 GPA) and college entrance and admission requirements (including FAFSA completion) for attaining a College Bound Scholarship.

Student Participants. Focus group interviews are a suitable means to measure social capital (Dudwick, Kuehnast, Nyhan Jones & Woolcock, 2006), gain perspective from ethnic minority groups (Hughes & DuMont, 1993), and determine program effectiveness (Patton, 1990). Focus group interviews allow a researcher to collect an exchange of anecdotes among participants for the purpose of exploring knowledge and experiences, using a series of open-ended questions (Kitzinger, 1995). While group interviews are often thought of as a high yield strategy of garnering responses, focus group discussions encourage participants to explore issues of personal importance and allow the researcher to gain access to responses which may not be gathered through individual questioning (Kitzinger, 1995). Focus groups allow the researcher to

explore topics and generate hypotheses based on the participants' responses (Kreuger & Anne, 1994) and reduce the researcher's potential bias (Horner, 2000).

Focus groups with adolescent participants allows the researcher to obtain the student's perspective of needs from the participant rather than perception of need if school staff were participants (Gibson, 2012). As conversation with peers is a part of the everyday life, the focus group setting may be more comfortable rather than individual interviews (Morgan, 1993). Building trust and rapport with the participants will be essential and may take a series of meetings for participants to gain familiarity with the researcher (Irwin & Johnson, 2005).

Disadvantages to focus group interviews include one dominant participant, participant reluctance to speak, and over moderated discussion (Lederman, 1990). I attempted to mitigate these disadvantages by use of a focus group protocol to ensure all student participants could express themselves and use of a focus group interview guide to minimize bias in the researcher's prompts for discussion (Lederman, 1990).

Counselor Participants. Electronic surveys are a convenient way to interview multiple respondents using a window of time for response rather than schedule individually interviews (www.pewresearch.org; Weible & Wallace, 1998). The counselor role varies from school to school based on principal direction, such as a counselor being assigned a special population of students (College Bound, Running Start, by grade level 10th/11th/12th). The use of an electronic survey allowed the customization of questions based on the counselor participant's role in the school. One disadvantage to using an electronic survey as opposed to one-on-one interviews is the anonymity of the responders and ability of the researcher to follow up with additional questions.

Participants

Student Participants. The intent of this study was to use archival data to select two focus groups of five students at each of the comprehensive high schools and one focus group of five students at the alternative high school, who enrolled in the College Bound Scholarship Program in their 7th or 8th grade year and are current juniors in the 2016-2017 academic school year. The first focus group would be further defined as currently holding at least a 2.0 GPA, subsequently meeting and needing to maintain the scholarship's GPA requirements. The second focus group would be defined as having a grade point average between 1.9-2.0, which dependent on course performance, students may be eligible for the scholarship after completion of the senior year's courses. Due to the limited number of students at the alternative high school, there would be a blended GPA grouping. Due to the low return of parent/guardian permission forms, one focus group at each high school was obtained and consisted of four students whose grade point average ranged between 1.9-2.5.

Due to the nature of this research project, student demographics will only include those students who were identified as low-income in their 7th or 8th grade year and are current eleventh graders. All other demographics, such as race, ethnicity, and gender will be represented within and between the student participant focus groups.

Counselor Participants. Each of the comprehensive high schools employ four full-time counselors and the alternative high school employs one full-time counselor. As noted above, counselor roles vary between schools, therefore all counselors will be included in the distribution of the survey, however the return rate varied based on the structure of the counseling department. At least one counseling representative completed the survey for each building.

Timing and Location

Student Participants. The focus groups met for two 60-minute sessions, once in October and again in January. Each of the sessions occurred during the school day and at the school of attendance for the student. Sessions were held in school conference rooms.

Dates were selected in accordance with interim progress report timelines of Pseudo School District. The purpose of using these timelines was to solicit student participant responses while their classes are in flux and course grades are not final.

Counselor Participants. Counselor surveys were distributed electronically in April to align with their review of students' transcripts and progress towards graduation. To better ensure counselor response rate, a pre-notification letter and email was sent prior to survey (Haggett and Mitchell, 1994). Post-notification followed when the survey window closed to encourage any remaining counselor participants to respond (Yammarino, Skinner & Childers, 1991).

Data Collection

Student Participants. Consent letters and explanation of research project and activities were mailed home to both parent/guardian and student in early September, collected by school personnel, and returned to the researcher. Both parent/guardian and student consent was granted for the student to be a part of the focus group interview.

Qualitative data was collected through focus group discussions, as well as individual surveys. Participants provided insight into barriers and supports needed for College Bound Scholar students to attain the scholarship requirements. The researcher took notes during the focus group interview, as well as recorded audio during the session. Audio recordings were transcribed. Participant reflections were synthesized and analyzed for themes. First, the researcher read through all personal notes and transcribed notes to obtain an overall

understanding of the session. Next, the researcher coded responses as themes developed from participant reflections using the theoretical framework of bonding and bridging social capital as well as other themes which emerged from participants. Themes emerged based upon the frequency and emphasis student participants placed upon the reflection. The researcher then organized responses into themes at a building level, as well as a district summary.

Counselor Participants. By accepting to respond to the survey, consent was given electronically to use survey responses as a cross-sectional of the analysis of barriers and needed supports for College Bound Scholars' scholarship attainment as outlined by student participants.

Findings (see Appendix for a summary of the following information)

Previous College Bound Scholar Cohort Data. A college ready transcript is defined as taking advance mathematics (Algebra II or higher), third year of science (beyond Biology), and two years of a world language. These three course types are the standard university entrance requirements.

In the class of 2012, 242 students were marked as CBS students and 98% were marked as graduating on-time. Twenty percent of the 2012 cohort failed to meet the 2.0 GPA requirement. Eighteen percent of students failed at least one English course and 28% failed at least one math course. Eleven percent of the 2012 cohort failed at least one English and one math course. In terms of taking college entrance courses, 76% took math courses Algebra II or higher, 43% took science courses beyond Biology, and 23% took at least two years of a world language. Fourteen percent of 2012 CBS students were enrolled in AVID. Twelve percent of the 2012 cohort attended an alternative educational setting to complete graduation requirements (Table 2, *Pseudo School District Cohort Data*).

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In the class of 2013, 224 students were marked as CBS students and 99% were marked as graduating on-time. Seventeen percent of the 2013 cohort failed to meet the 2.0 GPA requirement. Nineteen percent of students failed at least one English course and 32% failed at least one math course. Eleven percent of the 2013 cohort failed at least one English and one math course. In terms of taking college entrance courses, 86% took math courses Algebra II or higher, 41 took science courses beyond Biology, and 57% took at least two years of a world language. Twenty-one percent of 2013 CBS students were enrolled in AVID. Nine percent of the 2013 cohort attended an alternative educational setting to complete graduation requirements (Table 2, *Pseudo School District Cohort Data*).

In the class of 2014, 286 students were marked as CBS students and 98% were marked as graduating on-time. Eighteen percent of the 2014 cohort failed to meet the 2.0 GPA requirement. Twenty-four percent of students failed at least one English course and 34% failed at least one math course. Sixteen percent of the 2014 cohort failed at least one English and one math course. In terms of taking college entrance courses, 87% took math courses Algebra II or higher, 48% took science courses beyond Biology, and 59% took at least two years of a world language. Twenty-two percent of 2014 CBS students were enrolled in AVID. Eight percent of the 2014 cohort attended an alternative educational setting to complete graduation requirements (Table 2, *Pseudo School District Cohort Data*).

In the class of 2015, 338 students were marked as CBS students and 99% were marked as graduating on-time. Nineteen percent of the 2015 cohort failed to meet the 2.0 GPA requirement. Twenty-five percent of students failed at least one English course and 36% failed at least one math course. Seventeen percent of the 2015 cohort failed at least one English and one math course. In terms of taking college entrance courses, 86% took math courses Algebra II

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or higher, 42% took science courses beyond Biology, and 59% took at least two years of a world language. Twenty percent of 2015 CBS students were enrolled in AVID. Seven percent of the 2015 cohort attended an alternative educational setting to complete graduation requirements (Table 2, *Pseudo School District Cohort Data*).

In the class of 2016, 360 students were marked as CBS students and 95% were marked as graduating on-time. Twenty-two percent of the 2016 cohort failed to meet the 2.0 GPA requirement. Thirty percent of students failed at least one English course and 38% failed at least one math course. Twenty-one percent of the 2016 cohort failed at least one English and one math course. In terms of taking college entrance courses, 79% took math courses Algebra II or higher, 36% took science courses beyond Biology, and 52% took at least two years of a world language. Eighteen percent of 2016 CBS students were enrolled in AVID. Thirteen percent of the 2016 cohort attended an alternative educational setting to complete graduation requirements (Table 2, *Pseudo School District Cohort Data*).

Class of 2017 College Bound Scholar Cohort Data. Currently, Pseudo District reports 437 College Bound students will graduate June 2017. Twenty-one percent of these students have not met the 2.0 GPA requirement and will be unable to attain the required grade point average upon completion of second semester courses. Three hundred and forty-five students currently hold the minimum required grade point average and must successfully complete courses in second semester to maintain eligibility status. Students currently eligible for the College Bound Scholarship were more likely to complete standard university entrance requirements such as taking science courses beyond Biology (33%), Algebra II or higher math courses (81%), and completing two years of a world language (48%), than those not meeting the grade point average requirement (Table 3, *Class of 2017 Comparison of Achievements and 2.0 GPA Cut Score*).

Eighteen percent of 2017 CBS students were enrolled in AVID. Eleven percent (46 students) of the 2017 cohort currently attend school in an alternative educational setting.

In April, WSAC mailed school district superintendents an update regarding their Class of 2017 cohort and their completion of the FAFSA. Forty percent of College Bound seniors have submitted a FAFSA; however, only thirty-five percent are complete (Table 4, *WSAC Provided FAFSA Completion for 2017 PSD CBS Seniors*). Completion of a FAFSA is a requirement to obtain the scholarship funds.

Student Focus Group. Four students from each of the comprehensive high schools participated in the student focus group for this research study (n=12). Students were asked to reflect on their high school experience, courses taken, challenges, successes, College Bound Scholarship, and future goals.

As students reflected on their high school experience, three themes were highlighted: a) awareness of academic status, b) support structures in place or created as necessity, and c) strong emotional support from family and peers.

All twelve students spoke knowledgably about their current academic standing, courses taken, grade point average, state test scores. Students could describe to the researcher the multiple ways students have access to course information and status. Two students highlighted the benefits of the new learning management system, Schoology, utilized as a pilot project with social studies teachers. “We have Schoology and they post everything in there. Good for when you’ve been absent or lost something,” one student remarks. Benefits of Schoology included accessing class notes when absent or behind on coursework and flexibility of the instructor to post supporting materials. Students also cited Home Access, the student information system, as

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being helpful in determining current standing in classes; only two students noted teachers who do not keep up to date assignments in Home Access.

Students at School 1 and School 2 outlined structures in place within the school day to access teacher assistance. Flexible grouping involved student selection to a particular teacher to receive support during a study period when desired, as well as teacher assigned study period when required. “During advisory, I go to my teacher for help or they request you to come get help,” remarks a student. One student participant (School 2) is a member of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) and outlined a student-created support, S-7, which includes a grade monitor and academic support time within the JROTC. Two of the students at School 3 remarked on creating peer groups for academic support as the school lacked intervention support time during the day.

All student participants noted strong emotional support from their families and peers. Eight students remarked that their parents could only support them emotionally as just by being a junior in high school, they had already neared or surpassed the education their parents achieved. “Sadly, my parents can’t help, they don’t understand much of what I’m doing. They stopped going to school in like third grade in Mexico,” one student stated. Three students noted older siblings who provide academic support. In the absence of academic family support, students relied on systems within the school (JAG time or Advisory) or created peer study group if school groups did not exist.

Four of the students noted a language other than English spoken at home, one mentioned receiving English Language Learner services from the district. Family played an important role in determining next steps after high school, “going to college is big” and “since I’m the oldest, I want my siblings to look up to me,” two students stated. Students elicited reasons for continuing

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on to post-secondary education, such as: to give back to the family, to be able to get a job which would help support the family, and to better living conditions of self and/or family. “I don’t want to live like this [in a garage]” and “I want to be able to help my family with bills, because money is something we lack.”

When asked about opportunities for dual credit, college in the high school or Running Start as a means to start a college transcript, all students spoke knowledgably about the dual credit courses they had taken or were currently taking. Dual credit played a foundational role in eight of the students’ post-secondary education goals. Dual credit courses allowed students a hands-on approach to try pathway courses and provide an opportunity to earn college credit at a discounted price. While student participants were aware of Running Start, only one had initiated the process with their counselor. Students who were in Advanced Placement courses also spoke about the potential to earn college credit if they do well on their exams.

When asked about being a College Bound Scholar, students were familiar with the grade point average requirement. Students were able to recall junior high counselors meeting with them or receiving a packet to take home. Students could recall conversations with junior high counselors about being College Bound Scholars. From their high school experience, students in School 1 were able to recall times where high school counselors spoke to them about being College Bound Scholars. Students expressed that high school counselors place emphasis on credit attainment rather than post-secondary planning in group settings; however, students did note that high school counselors would discuss post-secondary planning one-on-one with them.

Class of 2018 and 2019. Looking ahead, the 2018 cohort currently has 401 students of which 21% are not meeting the 2.0 GPA requirement. One hundred and forty-eight students (40%) have failed at least one semester in a core English or mathematics course and an

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additional 90 students have failed a core English course and 130 students have failed a core mathematics course. Currently 32% of the cohort has completed or are currently taking Biology, 66% completed or are currently taking Algebra II or higher math course, and 24% have taken at least two years of a world language. AVID enrollment for the 2018 cohort is 19%, one percent higher than the 2017 cohort. Eight percent of the 2018 cohort attend school in an alternative setting, (Table 2, *Pseudo School District Cohort Data*).

The 2019 cohort currently has 538 students and while grade point average is still fluid in sophomore year, currently 19% students in the 2019 cohort do not hold a 2.0 GPA. Nine percent (47 students) have failed at least one semester of English and at least one semester of math. An additional 7% have failed an English course and 12% have failed a math course. AVID enrollment for the 2019 cohort is 15%. Currently, 5% of the 2019 cohort attend an alternative educational setting.

Counselor Focus Group. Each of the three high schools structure how they oversee College Bound Scholars differently and five counselors completed the survey. School 1 and 2 share CBS students across all four counselors' caseloads, while, School 3 creates a cohort model and all CBS students are overseen by one counselor.

School 1 cited lack of acceptance to college and lack of encouragement to attend college as the main reasons CBS students do not pursue education beyond high school. School 2 cited students desire to work after high school as the main reason. School 3 similarly cited lack of encouragement to attend college and lack of academically rigorous coursework as the main reasons CBS students do not pursue education beyond high school.

While both School 1 and 3 felt the College Bound Scholarship guidelines were easy for students to understand, neither felt students entered high school understanding the requirements.

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Both schools reported being supported by the district in identifying and supporting CBS students, however were not in alignment regarding building level support; School 1 chose “neither agree or disagree” in regard to feeling supported by building leadership to identify and support CBS students, while School 3 selected “strongly agree.” Similarly, School 1 also reported feeling overwhelmed with competing initiatives to meet student needs. School 2 reported that the guidelines were easy to understand and students enter high school understanding the requirements. School 2 reported feeling supported at the district and building level to meet the needs of College Bound Scholar students.

All three schools agreed their teaching staff believe in the ability of CBS students to attend post-secondary education and that staff should have an active role in talking with students about attending post-secondary education.

School 1 could list a variety of activities offered to support students and families in attaining post-secondary educations, such as: Financial Aid Nights, fall meetings with CBS students, and one-on-one support for completing their FAFSA. School 2 similarly listed Financial Aid Nights, as well as a post high planning night. School 3 declined to answer this question. School 1 and School 3 listed academic supports provided, such as: teacher support, afterschool tutoring, one-on-one counseling, and alternative courses (applied learning). School 2 listed core flex time in addition to the academic supports provided by School 1 and 3.

Pseudo School District offers three different settings for alternative education. The first is an alternative high school, similar to the comprehensive high school, students attend classes during the traditional school day. At the alternative high school, students have more access to credit retrieval, interventions, and smaller class sizes. However, students are limited to the classes they are able to take, including academically rigorous courses, based on the number of

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students attending and requesting courses, as well as the number of staff on hand. The second setting is a blend of online learning and teacher support. Students are able to access lab time and in-person assistance for course work. The third setting is a completely online setting, where students access support virtually. Both the blended online learning and online learning offer a variety of courses for students and are able to provide the academically rigorous courses that a comprehensive high school provides.

While none of the three options offer the AVID elective, the alternative high school does utilize the foundational structures such as keeping an organized binder, structure notetaking, and engaging and participatory lesson design. All three options also offer a Financial Aid Night.

The alternative high school has one school counselor and the online learning has three counselors. For the online learning setting, one counselor oversees the College Bound Scholars. Caseload varies for individual counselors based on the programs they oversee. Caseloads vary from 75 – 300 students in the alternative setting. Alternative setting counselors cited poor grades, applications not filed on time and low college admission test scores as the main reasons CBS students do not pursue education after high school.

Analysis

Pseudo School District has actively pursued 7th and 8th grade students to apply for the College Bound Scholarship as evidenced by the growing number of CBS students in each cohort. By increasing the enrollment in the College Bound Scholarship program, PSD has increased the potential access to post-secondary educational opportunity. However, the percentage of students who do not meet the scholarship's 2.0 GPA requirement has remained consistent at around 20%. The percent of students failing core English and Math courses increased with each graduating cohort and future cohorts show similar growth patterns of course failure.

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During the course of this study, approximately 10% of each current cohort (2017, 2018, and 2019) withdrew from the district during the school year. While this study did not focus on dropout rate specifically, CBS students exhibit many of the factors associated with dropping out such as low academic performance, failure of core English and math courses in 9th grade, and come from poverty stricken homes (McCallumore & Sparapani, 2010). When OSPI updates the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Application (P210), Pseudo School District will be able to document which students dropped out and which students withdrew and have a verified transfer to another district.

With the increase in state graduation requirements, students must complete Algebra 2 or an equivalent course to graduate. The number of College Bound Scholars in the 2012, 2013, and 2014 cohorts taking Algebra 2 or higher math courses increased; however, the cohorts that followed show students taking the equivalent math course credit to graduate rather than an Algebra 2 course. While math options may have created other avenues for students to meet the third math credit requirement in order to graduate on-time, college admissions requirements have not changed. This has resulted in Pseudo School District creating a subset of College Bound Scholars not able to enroll directly into 4-year universities based on course selection and academic advising.

Enrollment in at least one semester of the AVID elective benefited students from each cohort in attaining the 2.0 GPA or above (Table 5, *AVID Elective Participants' Data*). Students who had participated in AVID elective, experienced similar failure rates in core English and Math courses (Table 5, *AVID Elective Participants' Data*). However, students who participated in the AVID elective were more likely to persevere and successfully complete Algebra 2 or above math courses, science courses beyond Biology and at least two years of a world language.

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The bonding social capital created by participating in the AVID elective, unites students to continue pushing forward in the face of course failure and complete credit retrieval courses to remain on-track to graduate and be eligible for college admission. Enrollment in AVID for the Pseudo School District continues to be an avenue which promotes access to post-secondary educational attainment for low-SES students.

Recommendations

This study was to examine barriers College Bound Scholars face in achieving the scholarship requirements and what supports may be needed. These findings provide an overall picture of the achievement College Bound Scholars have found in meeting the scholarship requirements and potential barriers which limit students in actualizing the funds. Using the framework of Social Capital Theory, I suggest three recommendations to further support College Bound Scholars in Pseudo School District.

The first recommendation is to develop a systemic method for staff to collect and analyze data for College Bound Scholars and other students with low-SES. Analytics published by the State of Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) show low-income students have a lower rate of graduating on-time and enrolling in post-secondary education opportunities in Pseudo School District (Table 6, *OSPI Data Analytics Low vs. Non-Low Income Gap*). OSPI has also published PSD's low-income freshman are more likely to fail core academic courses (English, Math or Science) in junior high than their non-low income peers (Table 6, *OSPI Data Analytics Low vs. Non-Low Income Gap*). Use the district's student information system to identify low-income students and make visible to key staff members (principals, vice principals, counselors, and graduation specialists) in order to create data sets which could be pulled and analyzed on a quarterly basis. While, socioeconomic status is

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protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, data must be made visible in order to be actionable as this study has outlined an increase in failure rate and a plateau in the number of students meeting scholarship eligibility requirements and data provided by OSPI details a gap between low-income and non-low income students in terms of graduation rate, college enrollment, and course failure rates. Integrate analysis of data for low-income students in current data cycle structures within the building, to continue the analysis and reflection of the data that was collected because of this study. Review four year plans created in 8th grade and compare to courses taken by low-SES students to determine if students are meeting their intended educational goals.

This study has also shown nearly one third of all College Bound Scholars have needed credit retrieval for English or Math. While the bonding social capital which occurs in the AVID elective course creates the drive of the group to persevere through credit retrieval, the foundational issue is the large number of students requiring credit retrieval. The second recommendation is to examine barriers to credit attainment in English and Mathematics courses. While the student focus group did not elicit specific barriers to passing courses, their data depicts a different story. In order to obtain a college ready transcript with advanced courses, students must pass core classes on the first attempt to allow room in their schedule and avoid credit retrieval. Possible barriers worth investigating are teacher impact, assignment weighting, and student-centered instruction to promote high levels of student engagement.

The third recommendation is to develop a communication plan, to build bridging social capital, by increasing awareness and knowledge of scholarship requirements, academic supports, and increased peer interaction (Lin, 1999). In partnership with WSAC, follow the suggested activities for bringing CBS students together for the College Bound Re-pledge campaign. By

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gathering students together to recommit to the goal of the scholarship, bonding social capital increases and creates an opportunity to talk with students about their attendance and academic standing as part of the work towards the goal of post-secondary educational attainment. Follow up auto-generated communication from WSAC with face-to-face interactions (Kreuter & Lezin, 2012) to further increase bonding social capital between students and school personnel. Students in School 1 and 2 referenced academic supports available during the school day. Students in School 3 expressed that teacher help was available but afterschool. I recommend increasing peer interaction to create like groups working towards the same goal, similar to the AVID family structure (Szreter, 2000) which increased students' likelihood of meeting CBS scholarship requirements and having a college ready transcript (Table 5, *AVID Elective Participants' Data*). Peer interaction may include times for CBS students and parents to interact with school personnel in a group setting specific to CBS students rather than a schoolwide or grade level band approach. Peer interaction may also include grouping CBS students in classes together to create a cadre of students for whom bonding social capital will elicit the desire to continue reaching academic goals and meeting scholarship requirements.

Limitations

In this study, 12 students (3%) participated in the focus groups and students were not represented by the alternative educational settings offered in Pseudo School District. While not a large sample, information gathered from the focus groups shared the supports accessed and barriers students face in meeting the scholarship requirements. One of the emphasis of this study was to work with a group of students who still had control over the outcome of their grade point average.

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Counselor participation was limited, only five of the sixteen counselors at the comprehensive high schools surveyed, responded. In designing the questions to identify how CBS students were supported, schools which grouped all CBS students into one counselor's cohort, did not allow responders to feel compelled to complete the survey if they were not the one directly overseeing CBS students. Lack of participation will make it difficult to return data to a school without identifying the respondent of the survey.

Another limitation of this study is the incomplete data sets available from the student information system. During the course of this study, it was found that each of the eight junior highs had interpreted the process for entering College Bound Scholar data differently. While some schools entered all students who were given an application, other schools only entered those returned, and more entered those that were approved by Washington Student Achievement Council as eligible for the scholarship by meeting the income level requirement. Staff were able to connect with WSAC to receive records for years prior to 2016; not all data was capturable. The analysis above was limited by the data provided for cohorts prior to 2017 (Table 7, *College Bound Recipient Data*).

An unintended, but positive consequence of this study, is the school district now has a procedure in place for accurately capturing College Bound Scholar data as well as an awareness of the academic performance of students of poverty in the high school and the need for continued study. While Pseudo School District has striven to enroll all eligible students for the College Bound Scholarship, only a fraction of those students meet the scholarship requirement (Table 7, *College Bound Recipient Data*) and even fewer enroll in a post-secondary educational opportunity to receive the monies associated with meeting the requirements (Table 7, *College Bound Recipient Data*). End of the year data for the 2016 cohort will be available from WSAC

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in September 2017. There was a 34% decline in the number of students meeting the scholarship requirements from 2014 to 2015 and it will be imperative to examine if the trend continues when the 2016 data is returned.

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Appendix

Table 1.

Comparison of Social Capital and Reviewed Programs

Form of Social Capital	Activities:	Program			
		GEAR UP	Upward Bound	C5	AVID
Bonding	Counseling	X	X	X	
Bridging	Cultural Enrichment	X	X	X	
Bonding/Bridging	Guest Speakers	X			
Bonding	Teacher professional development	X			X
Bonding/Bridging	Mentoring/Tutoring	X	X	X	X
Bridging	Focus on creating college ready transcript	X	X	X	X
Bridging	Workshops for families (ex. FAFSA completion)	X	X		X

Table 2.

Pseudo School District Cohort Data

Cohort	Number	On-time graduation	<2.0 GPA	Failed English	Failed Math	Failed Both E and M	Algebra 2 and beyond	Science beyond Biology	2+ credits World Language	AVID	Alternate Educational Setting
2012	242	98%	20%	18%	28%	11%	76%	43%	23%	14%	12%
2013	221	99%	17%	19%	32%	11%	86%	86%	57%	21%	9%
2014	286	98%	18%	24%	34%	16%	87%	87%	59%	22%	8%
2015	338	99%	19%	25%	36%	17%	86%	86%	59%	20%	7%
2016	360	95%	22%	30%	38%	21%	79%	79%	52%	18%	13%
2017	437	TBD	21%	24%	36%	16%	73%	73%	44%	18%	11%
2018	401	TBD	21%	23%	32%	18%	66%	66%	24%	19%	8%
2019	538	TBD	19%	7%	12%	9%	TBD	TBD	TBD	15%	5%

Table 3.

Class of 2017 Comparison of Achievements and 2.0 GPA Cut Score

	Students with 2.0 GPA or higher	Students with GPA <2.0
Number of students	345	92
Need to meet state assessment requirement for graduation	21	25
Failed at least one math or English course	117	77
Science beyond Biology	113	7
Algebra II or higher	280	37
Two years of a world language	167	18
Completing school in an alternative educational setting	25	21

BARRIERS TO COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP ATTAINMENT

Table 4.

WSAC Provided FAFSA Completion for 2017 PSD CBS Seniors

School	Completed	Total	Percent Complete
School 1	46	140	33%
School 2	64	157	41%
School 3	60	151	40%
Alternative High School	n/a	n/a	n/a
Blended Learning	5	21	24%
Online Model	2	34	6%

(Denette Neville, Office of Equity and Achievement, personal communication, May 22, 2017).

BARRIERS TO COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP ATTAINMENT

Table 5.

AVID Elective Participants' Data

Cohort	Number	<2.0 GPA	Failed English	Failed Math	Failed Both E and M	Algebra 2 and beyond	Science beyond Biology	2+ credits World Language
2012	34	21%	21%	32%	18%	91%	62%	26%
2013	47	11%	26%	34%	17%	96%	45%	68%
2014	63	16%	17%	25%	10%	97%	56%	92%
2015	69	12%	20%	30%	13%	96%	55%	75%
2016	64	14%	27%	34%	19%	100%	53%	72%
2017	78	12%	23%	40%	15%	92%	36%	56%
2018	78	9%	13%	29%	10%	82%	44%	73%
2019	81	9%	9%	16%	5%	TBD	TBD	TBD

(Retrieved from the Pseudo School District's Student Information System).

BARRIERS TO COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP ATTAINMENT

Table 6.

OSPI Data Analytics Low vs. Non-Low Income Gap

	Low Income	Non-Low Income
Graduation Rate (2016)	69.4%	89.3%
Post-Secondary Enrollment (2014)	46%	62%
Course Failure Rate English (2016)	9.3%	3%
Course Failure Rate Math (2016)	13.4%	4.8%
Course Failure Rate Science (2016)	8.7%	3.1%

www.k12.wa.us/dataadmin.performanceindicators/postsecondaryenrollment.aspx).

Table 7.

College Bound Recipient Data

Graduation Year	College Bound Students (enrolled)	College Bound Scholars (met requirements)	College Bound Recipients (monies received)
2012	335	176 (50%)	75
2013	305	192 (63%)	78
2014	395	256 (65%)	83
2015	447	140 (31%)	54

(Kara Larson, Data Analyst for the Washington Student Achievement Council, personal communication, May 1, 2017).