

# Learning Brief:

## Part Two – Reiterating Social-Distance Friendly Programming at the East Oakland Youth Development Center

Fall 2020

### Overview

The East Oakland community has been hit particularly hard by the Coronavirus Pandemic. While many families have opted to keep their children at home, EOYDC recognized that a significant number of parents and caregivers need a safe place for their children to receive supervision, support, and resources.

Following the success of a 5-week in-person, COVID-responsive program pilot for in-person summer programming, EOYDC reiterated our programming approach for the fall semester.

The following learning brief summarizes our pilot programming approach, outcomes, and lessons learned.

*Note: This learning brief is intended to share EOYDC's experience and is not intended to serve as expert legal, medical, or compliance advice.*

**Mission:** EOYDC develops the social and leadership capacities of youth and young adults (ages 5 – 24) so that they are prepared for employment, higher education, and leadership opportunities.



Learn more about EOYDC and how you can access our services or support our work at

[www.eoydc.org](http://www.eoydc.org)



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EOYDC incorporated extensive COVID-19 safety protocols based on guidelines published by the Alameda County Public Health Department, OSHA, and the CDC.

## Safety Measures

- ✓ Mandate COVID testing for all staff and interns; staff required to retest monthly and following high-risk activities (e.g.; traveling by plane, attending a mass gathering, etc.)
- ✓ Provide ongoing staff training on safety guidelines including proper mask wearing, hand-washing, and disinfecting protocols
- ✓ Provide parents and caregivers with information on how they can mitigate risks at home
- ✓ All sign-in/out conducted outside of the building; only staff and participants allowed in the building during program hours (including parents)
- ✓ Daily health screening questions and temperature checks prior to entry
- ✓ Require everyone to wear masks inside of the building at all times; fresh surgical and/or KN95 masks provided to participants and staff daily
- ✓ Participants taught how to properly wash hands, with regularly scheduled handwashing breaks throughout the day
- ✓ Each class with no more than 10 people, seated at least 6 feet apart
- ✓ Upgraded air system filtration system to ensure optimal classroom ventilation
- ✓ Participants provided with their own individual activity supply kit to limit the spread of germs
- ✓ All meals and snacks served outdoors or in a large open space (e.g.; gym) with social distancing maintained between participants
- ✓ Sealed off all water fountains and provide participants with fresh water bottles daily
- ✓ Fridays reserved for staff prep and deep cleaning
- ✓ Hired janitorial service for daily cleanings and weekly deep cleanings
- ✓ Shift to virtual program during virus surges, as advised by health officials; EOYDC took this precaution from late-November through January based on the COVID-19 surge during this period.

## K-8 Programming Overview

EOYDC's K-8 programming consists of the **After-School Leadership Academy (ASLA)** and **The Bridge**. ASLA develops the leadership capacities of elementary school students (grades K-5) by exposing them to new ideas and opportunities, improving academic performance, and developing social and emotional learning skills. The Bridge prepares middle school students (grades 6-8) at risk of academic and social disengagement to transition to high school and be on track for college.

For fall programming (August-November 2020), we expanded in person program hours from traditional after school hours (3-6pm) to full-day programming from 8:30am-5pm, Monday-Thursday. This allowed us to support school assigned distance learning, while allowing time for daily enrichment activities and supports including:

- Arts and crafts
- STEM labs
- Yoga, rowing in partnership with Oakland Strokes, and recreational games
- Free lunch and snack

Full day programming was an especially vital resource for working parents who were unable to work from home.



## Outcomes

- ❑ Over **120** ASLA and Bridge students from 28 different schools have participated in social-distance/COVID-responsive program activities, **~50** of whom received direct support in school-assigned distance learning
- ❑ EOYDC has distributed winter coats, toys, books, and food boxes, and/or school supplies to over **250** elementary and middle school students
- ❑ **100%** of surveyed parents agree that the program has served them extremely well or very well throughout the fall semester and **90%** rate the distance learning support program as **8/10** or higher

## Pathway to College and Career

**Pathway to College & Career (PTC<sup>2</sup>)** is an after-school program that supports high school and college students (ages 13 to 24) in overcoming barriers to academic and career success.



PTC<sup>2</sup> has shifted college prep workshops for high school students to online delivery. While PTC<sup>2</sup> does not typically include enrichment activities, we have integrated more recreational activities to keep adolescent youth who are struggling with social isolation engaged in fun activities with peers and staff.

PTC<sup>2</sup> hosted our annual “Something for Everyone” scholarship fundraiser event virtually, featuring graduation acknowledgements for all graduating high school and college seniors, as well as junior college transfer and graduate school students.

## Outcomes

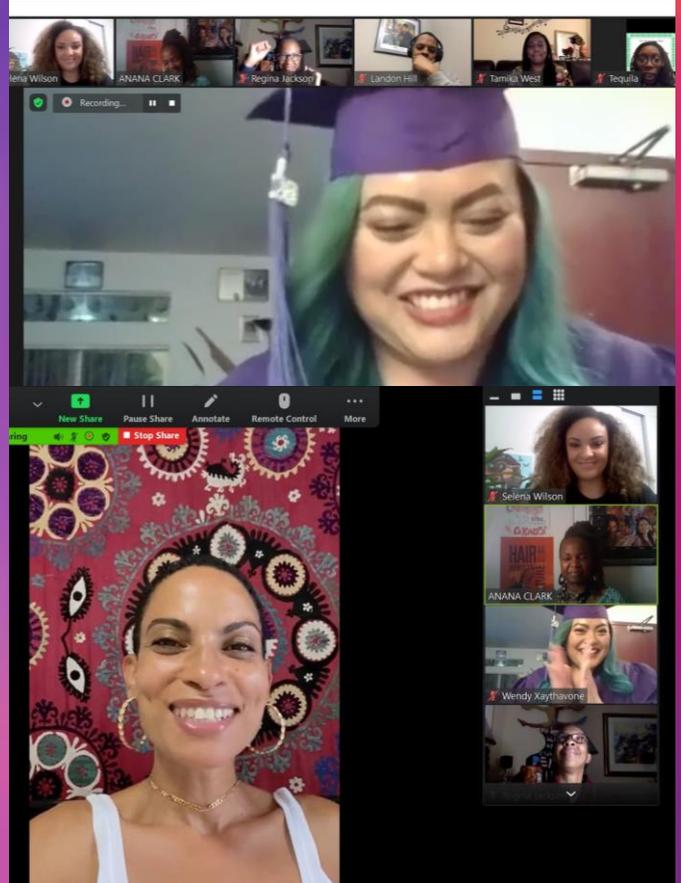
- ❑ **100%** of high school seniors enrolled in the PTC<sup>2</sup> program graduated from high school on time
- ❑ EOYDC distributed **\$106k** in scholarships ranging from \$500-\$5000 to **40** incoming/continuing college students
- ❑ **71** high school and college students have participated in EOYDC’s work-based learning program from July-December 2020, earning over **\$150k** in compensation
- ❑ **91%** of students who participated in the work-based learning program agreed that the program helped them improve their overall professional skills and 95% agreed the internship helped them to develop as a leader, improve their communication skills, and improve their conflict management skills

## Education Empowerment

**Education Empowerment** assists youth and adults (ages 17.5+) who have not successfully completed high school and are in need of a second chance. The program prepares students for the High School Equivalency exam, while providing them with critical life skills and personal development coaching

Starting summer 2020, Education Empowerment resumed COVID-responsive in person classes. Students were also given virtual options and loaned and/or given necessary equipment, such as laptops, as needed.

During the month of December, Education Empowerment held a virtual graduation ceremony featuring congratulatory video messages from Oakland greats Marshawn Lynch, Goapele, Klay Thompson, and Stephen Curry.



## Outcomes

- ❑ 5 students earned their high school equivalency certification
- ❑ 16 students have continued to work towards obtaining their high school equivalency certification throughout the pandemic

## Lessons Learned & Key Considerations

- Increased screen time, decreased social interaction, and decreased access to hands-on activities have impacted the mental and emotional well-being of our young people. Providing engaging, hands-on activities, opportunities to connect with others, and other socio-emotional supports has been critical.
- Distance learning schedules vary by school. As such, we learned to manage various virtual class schedules. Ensuring self-directed activity options were available to students during shorter breaks and identifying larger chunks of time that the majority of students were available to engage in instructor-led enrichment activities was key.
- The pandemic is not only a stressor for the community we serve, but our staff, as well. As staff continue to work hard to offer the best programming possible during this unprecedented time, EOYDC has expanded health benefits, caregiver leave, and other supports to contribute to the overall well-being of our team.



## Acknowledgements

EOYDC is tremendously grateful to the funders and donors who make it possible for us to offer free programming, to the health officials and experts who have provided critical guidance throughout the pandemic, to our staff for their hard work and dedication, and to the families that we serve for trusting us to be a part of their village.